

A Letter from Brenda Tracy to the Oregon House of Representatives
Stand with Survivors of Sexual Assault: Vote Yes on HB 2014

Members of the Oregon House of Representatives,

My name is Brenda Tracy and as many of you know, I am the survivor of a gang rape by Oregon State University football players. The memories of that night are burned into my memory forever. Although I try, I will never forget the sound of their laughing as they took turns raping me. I will never forget the smell of dried vomit in my hair as I picked myself up off the living room floor the next morning. These are memories and trauma I would never wish on my worst enemy.

I endured intense ridicule from my community after reporting my assault. I was called a liar and treated like a perpetrator when in fact, I was the victim of a terrible crime. I received death threats. After being told prosecution was unlikely because my gang-rape was a "he-said-she-said" case – I dropped the charges and endured more ridicule. This time my community said "If she was really raped then she would prosecute." The OSU players received a one game suspension for my rape and Head Football Coach Mike Riley told reporters: "These are really good guys who just made a bad choice".

The next 16 years were hard. I dealt with depression, PTSD, suicidal ideation and a borderline eating disorder. And not only did I suffer, but my family and my children suffered.

In recent years, I've turned my pain into my purpose. I travel the country advocating for survivors and sharing my story. I spend time talking to those in positions of power that can enact and support positive change. Today, I'm asking you to vote yes on HB 2014. Survivors deserve justice. We deserve to be heard and compensated as a jury of our peers deems appropriate. Survivors matter and what happened to us matters. Our lives and our experiences should not be minimized.

I urge you to stand with survivors of sexual assault and harassment by supporting HB 2014.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Brenda Tracy

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3/25/11