

From the desk of Representative Karin Power



Vote Yes on HB 3077-A

Sexual harassment is a major problem in Oregon. The 2018 Oregon Healthy Teens Survey found that 7 percent of Oregon eighth graders and 6 percent of Oregon eleventh graders reported experiencing unwanted sexual comments or attention in the thirty days prior to the administration of the survey. In Oregon, 19 percent of eleventh graders reported having experienced sexual coercion at some point in their lives. These figures do not take into account those who chose not to participate in the survey.

In 1997, the Legislative Assembly took action by creating a policy for sexual harassment reporting and investigation in Oregon's K-12 schools. Those requirements are codified at ORS 342.700-704. In the 2018 session, the legislature passed House Bill 4150, which modernized those protections.

While HB 4150 took a meaningful first step toward addressing the systemic problem of student sexual harassment, there is still work to be done. The act of reporting sexual harassment can be intimidating and confusing. Some students find the definition of sexual harassment and the investigation process to be unclear and insufficient, which makes filing a report following an incident challenging. Investigations into sexual harassment may take more than a year to complete without survivors receiving information about the resources available for support.

House Bill 3077-A builds on the legislature's previous work on K-12 sexual harassment reporting and investigation policy requirements. Specifically, it requires a new definition of harassment, clarification of certain aspects of the reporting and investigation process, and the provision of resources and support to individuals who report sexual harassment.

HB 3077-A passed from the House Judiciary Committee with unanimous support. We urge your yes vote on this important bill to help protect our students. Thank you.

 4/23/19

