

Support of HB 2986

Chairman Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher and Members of Senate Judiciary

I want to thank Rep. Gomberg for drafting HB 2986. I wish to support this bill.

I am a retired attorney who represented women as an Americorps attorney 1998-2000 at Lane County Legal Aid. My cases were exclusively Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

The passage of this bill is necessary because gender has been omitted from the list of prejudice designations identified for police and reserve officer training. The vast majority of domestic violence survivors are female. Sexual assault is not mentioned at all in the current statute. Training specifically ensured for these gender issues is necessary to identify and meet the critical and sensitive needs of survivors. It's crucial that it be in the statute as are all the other categories for permanent inclusion.

Malcolm Gladwell's book, Talking to Strangers : What We Should Know..., is being used to train police officers. Teaching them to see their own stereotypes of people (in this case women) and how their expectations of behaviors don't match with the reality of women's experiences is an example of how gender training could be helpful for everyone.

Thank you for considering this simple but crucial bill.

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