

OREGON ATTORNEY GENERAL'S SEXUAL ASSAULT TASK FORCE



SUPPORT SB 867 SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY FEBRUARY 27, 2023

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee:

Thank you for your time and consideration. For the record, my name is Carli Rohner, and I am here as a representative for the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force, where I serve as the Campus Coordinator, and facilitate our legislative collaborations with our staff and stakeholders across the state. I have worked as a direct survivor services provider/advocate, preventionist, and policy specialist on issues related to sexual violence for over fifteen years. **On behalf of Oregon SATF, I urge your support of Senate Bill 867 to support survivors of sexual violence.**

The mission of the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force¹ is to advance a mutli-disciplinary, survivor-centered approach to the prevention of and response to sexual violence in Oregon. Our goal is to prevent sexual violence from happening in the first place, while simultaneously improving our response efforts to mitigate trauma and ensure the safety and security of all victims.

In our field, we know that sexual violence is a crime rooted in exercising power and control over another person.²

Unfortunately, those who choose to abuse or harm others may not stop this exertion of control after the initial violation.

Research goes on to show that people who commit sexual and domestic violence will often threaten a victim/survivor if that survivor engages in accountability measures, like the criminal justice process.³

Commonly, these threats by defendants achieve one singular goal: to ensure that the person who caused harm will not, or can not, be held accountable for the harm they caused.

Once a survivor has experienced these threats, further action on behalf of the state to continue to personally serve them can:

- Exacerbate and compound trauma already experienced by the survivor by having power and control taken away from them; and
- Endanger the survivor by positioning them as a willing participant in the criminal justice process, even if they are not.

When the state can meet its burden of proof and demonstrate that a defendant's actions lead the victim/survivor to not participate or appear, allowing the victim/survivor's prior statements to be utilized in lieu of in-person testimony is grounded in what research shows to be best practice for the mitigation of re-traumatization for survivors of sexual violence.⁴

SB 867 builds upon the great work done by this legislature to ensure fair, equitable access to justice for survivors in the criminal justice process. Our agency requests that you continue this great work, and support Senate Bill 867.

I welcome any questions you may have, thank you for your time and consideration.
Sincerely,



Carli Rohner
Campus Coordinator
Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force
carli@oregonsatf.org.

- 1 The Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force is a private, non-profit, non-governmental statewide agency with over 100 multidisciplinary members appointed by Attorney General Rosenblum.
- 2 The Duluth Model (2013) [online] available at <http://www.theduluthmodel.org>
- 3 Fritzler, R. B., & Simon, L. M. (2000). Creating a domestic violence court: Combat in the trenches. *Court Review*, 37(1), 28-39. (indicating that research shows that batterers threaten retaliatory violence in as many as half of all cases and 30 per cent of batterers assault their victims again during the predisposition phase).
- 4 Cohn, Zinzow, Resnick, & Kilpatrick, (2013); Feldhaus, Houry, & Kaminsky, (2000), and Campbell, R. (2008); Henninger, A. L., Iwasaki, M., Carlucci, M. E., & Lating, J. M. (2020); Lorenz, Kulkner & Ullman (2019); Mckenna and Holfreter (2020).