

Dear Joint Committee on Ways and Means,

Introduction

My name is Peri Joy Long. I am a Reed College senior, and I am writing to you today on behalf of HB3456, “Relating to sexual misconduct at institutions of higher education,” a bill I, alongside other students in and from Oregon with The Every Voice Coalition, have been working on for the last two years. **HB3456 passed the House Committee on Higher Education with bipartisan support on April 4th and is now in front of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means.**

Background on HB3456 and Campus Sexual Violence in Oregon

First, I would like to share why I believe so much in HB3456: As a student and a confidential advocate for survivors of sexual violence at my school, I have seen firsthand the detrimental impact sexual violence has on a student’s life. **With estimated rates of campus sexual violence around 1 in 10 students, roughly 20,000 college students across Oregon campuses have or will experience sexual violence in 2023.** However, 95% of student-survivors do not come forward to report their incidents and 85% do not access post-incident supportive resources, meaning that this year an estimated 17,000 current Oregon students will be navigating the aftermath of a traumatic incident alone. **This is particularly alarming considering the severe mental, social, educational, and economic impacts sexual violence has been demonstrated to have on students.**

Through my work with survivors, I have witnessed just how difficult it can be to access and navigate institutional supportive resources, if these are available at all. HB3456 has five core components designed to prevent campus sexual violence, ensure institutional transparency and accountability, and increase support for student-survivors. If the components of this bill were in place throughout colleges and universities in the state, so many students would be better able to access supportive resources and services, understand their rights and options, and feel more supported as they continued to pursue their degrees.

Additionally, sister bills to HB3456 have been passed in 6 states – We have seen each component be successfully implemented and have been able to strengthen bill language to ensure it is the clearest, and most effective it can be before we brought it to Oregon!

Fiscal Implications of HB3456

We’ve always known that HB3456 will cost some money to implement, and the fiscal impact statement prepared for HB3456 does a great job of laying out those costs: “The measure is expected to have a total fiscal impact of \$884,713 General Fund ...in 2023-25, and \$809,618 General Fund for in 2025-27, for the Higher Education Coordinating Commission and Legislative Policy and Research Office.” **We know that there is not much wiggle room in the Oregon state budget this year, but are bringing this bill to your Committee with a clear ask: students need the components of HB3456 urgently to address the sexual violence epidemic we face every day on our campuses. And, the components of HB3456 have specifically been designed to be the most cost-effective for all governmental bodies and institutions.**

To put the fiscal impact statement into some context, the estimated lifetime cost of rape is \$122,461 per survivor. **Some simple math tells us that the estimated lifetime cost per survivor multiplied by an estimated 20,000 Oregon student-survivors in 2023 leaves us with as much as \$2,449,220,000 across Oregon student-survivors who experienced sexual violence in 2023 alone.**

Furthermore, the bill is designed to be the most cost-effective and streamlined approach to ensuring a state-wide standard of care for students. Indeed, for all of the important components of HB3456 to be implemented for *only* \$884,713 is actually a deeply exciting investment opportunity: For example, the bill requires each Institution of Higher Education to administer a campus climate survey to collect data on sexual misconduct incidents, but it outsources the majority of the costs associated with administering a campus climate survey for individual institutions by having a council of stakeholders (supported by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission) create a base survey for all institutions to use.

As detailed in the fiscal note, about half of the total cost (\$477,837 General Fund in 2023-25 and \$350,158 General Fund in 2025-27) of the *entire* fiscal impact of HB3456 is directly allocated to the HECC to hire more staff to oversee the creation of the base survey and support individual institutions as they administer the survey. While that may seem like a high cost, to put this into perspective, the University of California system of 9 colleges spent \$602,000 on their 2014 campus climate survey, with a cost breakdown of ~\$66,888/survey/school. For comparison, under the model in HB3456, for Oregon's 64 schools to administer their campus climate survey, it would cost the state ~\$7,466/survey/school with ZERO of that coming from individual schools' budgets. That's an amazing opportunity: the way HB3456 is designed is explicitly so that schools are *not* required or expected to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to collect this crucial data.

To summarize, **not only does HB3456 contain crucial policies in order to ensure students have safe and supported access to higher education, but the policy is specifically designed to be the most implementable, cost-effective, and flexible for institutions it can be.** Passing HB3456 is a deeply important investment in ensuring that all students who attend Oregon colleges and universities can thrive in school and as future participants in the workforce. Please stand up in support of students and survivors by passing HB3456.

Thank you,

Peri Long & The Every Voice Coalition