



123 North Enola Drive
Enola, PA 17025

Toll Free: (877) 739-3895
Phone: (717) 909-0710
Fax: (717) 909-0714
TTY: (717) 909-0715

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Kristen Houser, Chief Public Affairs Officer
National Sexual Violence Resource Center
877-739-3895, ext. 144; khouser@nsvrc.org

www.nsvrc.org



OFFICIAL STATEMENT: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Policies must provide options on and off campus

Enola, PA — The National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) commends the North American Intrafraternity Conference (NIC) and National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) for withdrawing support of the Safe Campus Act. This bill would be a huge step backwards in ending sexual assault on college campuses by prohibiting institutions of higher education from investigating allegations unless a survivor has first notified law enforcement.

This bill does not account for the trauma survivors experience and the critical time they may need to seek help and process the assault. Moreover, it greatly undermines how schools enforce their own codes of conduct, ensure safety on their campuses and make accommodations for students after an assault. Unlike the criminal justice system, colleges and universities have the ability to act quickly to remove perpetrators from campus and provide assistance and resources to survivors as they continue their education. The Safe Campus Act would limit the support campuses provide after a report of sexual assault, and instead it puts responsibility on a traumatized young person. This only has the potential to make campuses less safe and deter survivors from coming forward for help after an assault.

While it's a promising sign that NIC, NPC and eight sororities have stated that they do not endorse the Safe Campus Act, the legislation remains a threat. We encourage additional student and alumni groups, as well as victim advocacy organizations, to speak out. These voices are critical in challenging this legislation as well as the Fair Campus Act, which similarly requires changes to schools' disciplinary processes that would be detrimental when incidents of sexual violence occur.

NSVRC knows that collaboration is critical to address and prevent campus sexual assault. In this effort, we'll continue to work with college campus communities. It is encouraging to be joined by voices from Greek life as we advocate for policy solutions that support survivors through options both on and off campus. These efforts are vital in ensuring campuses are safe and sexual assault cases are handled fairly.

ABOUT NSVRC

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center, founded by the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, celebrates its 15th anniversary this year. The center leads the U.S. in providing professional support to local and state anti-sexual violence organizations. NSVRC collaborates with partners nationwide to create research-based resources that focus on how to prevent and respond to sexual violence. The organization has the nation's largest library of resources on sexual violence and prevention. To learn more, go to www.nsvrc.org.

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