

CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE



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NEW TITLE IX RULES HARM STUDENT SURVIVORS WHILE PROTECTING PREDATORS

Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence stands in strong opposition to the Title IX rule announced today by the Trump Administration.

(EAST HARTFORD, CT) After a prolonged and controversial review process, the final Title IX rules which are intended to protect students from discrimination based on a person's sex or gender were published to the federal register by the U.S. Department of Education on May 6th, giving the rules the force of law. The Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence (The Alliance) stands in strong opposition to the rules and stands in solidarity with the many student survivors nationwide that these rules will harm.

As part of the federal civil rights law passed as part of the Education Amendments of 1972 Title IX protects people from discrimination based on their sex or gender in education programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance.

"These rules reduce the rights of survivors of sexual violence, reduce the ability for institutions to defend and support survivors, and certainly protect perpetrators," said Beth Hamilton, incoming Executive Director of The Alliance. "We join our partners across the nation to ensure students are protected during and after the implementation of the rules."

The rules will go in effect on August 14. Some of the changes include a much higher and harmful "sexual harassment" definition; a presumption that the perpetrator is not responsible and the violence did not occur, rather than with neutrality toward both parties; decreasing the institution's responsibilities to investigate allegations of sexual misconduct; limiting appeal options for survivors; dismissing complaints when assaults happen at "locations, events, or circumstances" that the school does not have "substantial control" over; and reducing accountability for institutions to address sexual violence.

Connecticut was one of the first states in the nation to protect student sexual assault and harassment victims in higher education through the passage of comprehensive proactive legislation in 2014 and 2017. The coordinated response to sexual assaults on campus was passed in partnership with legislators, sexual assault advocates, and Title IX coordinators at the state's universities. In response to the rules proposed by the Trump administration through Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, additional legislation passed in 2019 created a task force to study the impact of the rules on current state laws once promulgated.

"We want student survivors in our communities and nationwide to know that we validate the significant emotions and concern that the publication of these rules may have caused. You are not alone. We believe you. What happened to you was not your fault, and we will advocate for you in absolutely every way that we can. We stand with you and for you, today and always," said Bridget Koestner, Campus Coordinator with The Alliance.

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The Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence (formerly CONNSACS) is the statewide coalition of Connecticut's nine community-based sexual assault crisis services programs whose mission is to create communities free of sexual violence and to provide culturally affirming, trauma-informed advocacy, prevention, and intervention services centered on the voices of survivor.
www.endsexualviolencect.org / 860-282-9881

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