



VOTE YES SB 3: AN ACT COMBATING SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Time's Up Act / House Calendar 613

SB 3 *as amended by the Senate*, extends the statute of limitations for most sex crimes. This includes extending class B and C felony crimes, such as rape by force or intent of force, to 20 years; as well as extending misdemeanors to 10 years; and tightening training requirements and policies to protect victims of sexual harassment for Connecticut's employers. For the majority of sex crimes, Connecticut law currently provides survivors **the third shortest statute of limitations in the country and the shortest in New England**. **Victims need time to disclose: Give Victims Time.**

SB 3 will:

Expand the *criminal statute of limitations* for crimes of sexual assault:

- 20 years if the victim is 21 years or older (currently 5 years)
- 10 years for misdemeanors (currently 1 year)
- Class A felonies and the DNA exception remain with no SOL
- 30 years from their 21st birthday for victims age 18, 19 and 20 (age 51)

Protect and expand the *civil statute of limitations* for victims of criminal assault:

- 30 years from their 21st birthday for victims under age 21
- There will be a civil "rape shield" - past sexual history will not be admitted into evidence
- Task Force to examine Connecticut's current civil laws for sexual assault crimes

Ensure both our employers and employees receive training and information to prevent and respond to *workplace sexual harassment and discrimination* fairly.

Why do we need these changes?

- Victims face multiple barriers to reporting after assault. In addition to coping with its traumatic impact, survivors often face threats or intimidation by the offender, their family members or friends. They also risk being blamed, shamed or scrutinized for their assault if they disclose or report the abuse.
- Only about 2% of all rape and related sex charges are determined to be false, which is the same percentage as for other felonies.¹ *Moreover, a woman is much more likely to be disbelieved if she says she was raped than if she says she was robbed.*
- The average age to disclose childhood sexual abuse is 52.²
- Sexual harassment training for ALL employees creates an inclusive workplace culture, highlights acceptable and unacceptable behavior, empowers bystanders, and encourages reporting.
- Women of color experience more harassment (sexual, racial/ethnic, or a combination of the two) than white women, white men, and men of color do. Those part of a sexual or gender minority experience more sexual harassment than heterosexual women do.³
- 75% of employees who spoke out against workplace mistreatment faced retaliation.⁴ 25% of women strongly felt they could not report an incident to their supervisor. 50% of women and 64% of men agree that harassment in the workplace hurt their career.⁵

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21164210>

² <https://www.childusa.org/sol>

³ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK519455/>

⁴ https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/task_force/harassment/upload/report

⁵ <https://www.edisonresearch.com/sexualharassmentworkplace/>

Victims of Sexual Assault Speak Out

Why the Current 5-Year Statute of Limitations for Most Sexual Assault Crimes is Not Enough

“There has been no statute of limitations on my guilt, shame, depression, anxiety, struggles with promiscuity, addiction, recidivism, trouble holding jobs or healthy relationships, and many more other effects. So why should there be a statute of limitations on the consequences of his actions on him, when there is none to the consequences to me?”

There is no equivalency between most sexual assault and property theft, yet they share the same 5-year statute of limitations. A victim of a property theft can recover or replace what was stolen; but for victims of sexual assault, the recovery is not as simple, because it is their body, mind, and psyche that was stolen.

“After 5 years of panic attacks, depressions, loneliness, and shame, I had finally felt stable enough to seek justice, but when I did, the statute of limitations robbed me of that right. I was also robbed of the chance to prevent this crime from happening to other women because today, my rapist walks free because of the statute of limitations.”

The current 5-year statute of limitations is not only too short for many victims to come forward but also may be far too short for an investigation to occur, leaving sex offenders free to assault again.

“I had known that the 5-year window was ending and I made sure to report my rape within that time frame. However, it took the judicial system 46 days to process my rapist’s arrest, which turned out to be 4 days after the 5-year cut-off. My case was dismissed because my rapist wasn’t arrested until 4 days after the 5-year statute of limitations had expired.”

“Police presented my case to the D.A. It even included a confession letter... I have a confession letter from my rapist. The D.A. had degraded my rape case from a felony to a misdemeanor because the rapist did not present a physical threat with a weapon – giving me only 1 year to report it. I reported too late. I was punished for being late. My rapist still takes the train to work every day, appearing as a regular guy, instead of being punished for the predator and rapist that he is. He was not obligated to talk to the police and hired an attorney to do that. Never even had to answer a question. I had to rush my report, relive my horrible experience and then be told in so many words, “You reported too late, so your case doesn’t matter. You don’t matter. Go home and get over it.”

“The 5-year clock starts on the day of the assault. After an assault is reported, prosecutors and law enforcement need time to conduct an investigation, collect evidence, interview witnesses and build a case. There have been cases where the statute of limitations has expired before a case can be fully built, which deprives the victim a chance for justice through no fault of their own.”

Connecticut’s current 5-year statute of limitations protects sexual offenders and not their victims.

#GiveVictimsTime

QUESTIONS? Contact Lucy Nolan, Director of Policy and Public Relations, Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence
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Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence Member Centers

