



Fact Sheet In Support of HB 4488 and HB 4490 in Michigan

General Sexual Violence Statistics

- ***It is estimated that nearly one in three women and one in six men in the US will experience sexual violence in their lifetime- most of these crimes will go unreported.***
- 51% of female victims of rape reported being raped by an intimate partner
- 91% of victims of rape and sexual assault are female
- 81% of women report impacts such as PTSD
- One in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused before they turn 18
- 27% of college women have experienced some form of unwanted sexual contact
- Rape is the most under-reported crime; 63% of sexual assaults are not reported
- Every 92 seconds, an American is sexually assaulted
- Only 5 out of every 1,000 perpetrators will end up in prison
- Experts estimate that in reality only 2% to 8% of sex crime accusations are false
- 1 out of every 10 rape victims are male
- 33% of women who are raped contemplate suicide
- About 1 in 6 college-aged female survivors received assistance from a victim services
- More than half of rapists have a prior conviction
- In 29% of rapes, the offender used a weapon
- One in four victims of sexual assault under the age of 12 is male
- Someone with a disability is twice as likely to be a victim of sexual assault or rape than a person without a disability
- ***The estimated lifetime cost of sexual violence is roughly \$122,461 per survivor***

The right to a sexual assault counselor, private counsel and support person are vital human rights for survivors of sexual assault

- The violence perpetrated against a survivor of sexual assault stays with that individual for years if not the rest of their lives- coming forward and reporting this violence takes courage. It can be confusing and retraumatizing.
- Reporting a sexual assault can mean reliving the experience over and over again starting with the forensic medical exam and continuing with each subsequent interview by law enforcement, each deposition that occurs. Recounting the experience can be retraumatizing and triggering as the survivor relives the details of the violence they experienced.
- Studies have shown the impact trauma can have on the brain, in particular memory and cognizance:
 - The trauma experienced by a survivor can make law enforcement interviews and depositions especially confusing and chaotic, and more so if the survivor has no one on their side to support them.

- Law enforcement and others conducting depositions may have limited training on the effects of trauma to the brain and memory and questions posed to the survivor may unintentionally be harmful to the survivor's case.
- The right to a sexual assault counselor, and to have private counsel present throughout the criminal justice process provides the survivor with experts who are there to support *them*, and help them navigate the process with more clarity.
- The presence of private counsel also ensures that law enforcement and the court system are able to get a more accurate accounting of what happened by providing the survivor with support and security, helping them feel safe and calm.

Throughout the US, there are too many incidents of survivors coming forward to report their sexual assault only to find themselves being charged with false reporting instead. Instances like Lara- whose experience was published by BuzzFeed News in 2015- who reluctantly came forward in 2011 to report being sexually assaulted by her brother-in-law, but instead was arrested along with her sister for falsely reporting the crime. The criminal justice system did not only let Lara down, but upended her entire family causing severe emotional and financial distress as they not only tried to heal from the assault Lara experienced, but also fought to clear her and her sister's names. Lara's experience is from 2011, but the problem is still prevalent today as showcased in the Netflix documentaries "Victim/Suspect" and "American Nightmare." Ensuring that survivors are able to come forward, report the violence perpetrated on them, and have proper guidance and support throughout the criminal justice process, will help ensure survivors have equal access to justice under the law and help ensure law enforcement is better equipped with facts and evidence to investigate cases.

The criminal justice system should provide equality under the law for survivors, making it easier for survivors to report the violence they've experienced. The right to have a sexual assault counselor, private counsel and/or a support person of their choosing present throughout the criminal justice process helps to do just that. We should want to encourage more people to feel like they can come forward and report crimes and we should want to provide them with the security that if they do so, the system will be fair and balanced, not stacked against them.

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