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STANDING COMMITTEE
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SENATOR KEVIN DE LEÓN PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

SB 695 (De León and Jackson)

PURPOSE:

Augment high school health curriculum to educate adolescents on sexual assault prevention and the importance of developing positive, healthy relationships in order to reduce assault incidents in the future.

BACKGROUND:

Between 1995-2013, the highest rate of rape and sexual assault victimizations affected females between the ages of 18-24. The female victims in this age group not enrolled in college were 1.2 times more likely to experience rape and sexual assault than females enrolled in college. Furthermore, approximately 80% of college-age victims knew their offender.¹

In 2014, California enacted SB 967 (De León), Chapter 748, which was a comprehensive overall of how colleges and universities address sexual violence. One of the main components of the bill was establishing an affirmative consent standard, the first application of the “yes means yes” concept in the country. SB 967 shifted the paradigm away from the current practice of assuming consent in the absence of a “no” response from a victim. Only an explicit “yes,” either through verbal or nonverbal communication, means consent.

Given the statistics regarding the victimization of women between the ages of 18-24, high school students are the most vulnerable population and the importance of educating them early on these issues is paramount to reducing the number of incidents. Many California high schools require health education as a condition of graduation. As part of this education, students in grades 9-12 learn about the importance of healthy relationships, how interpersonal communication affects relationships, decision-making skills to extract oneself from an unhealthy situation, and an understanding of issues related to bullying, sexual harassment and violence. The next step in expanding these education efforts is to discuss the issue of rape and sexual violence with all high school students – male and female.

¹*Special Report: Rape and Sexual Assault Victimization Among College-Age Females, 1995-2013*, U.S. Department of Justice, Langton, Lynn and Sinozich, Sofi.

PROPOSAL:

- Requires a school district, if they require a student to complete a health course as a condition of graduation, to provide instruction on sexual assault and violence.
 - Requires the instruction to include information on the affirmative consent standard established in SB 967 (De León), Chapter 748, Statutes of 2014.
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SUPPORT:

Berkeley High School Stop Harassing
California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA)
National Organization for Women, California Chapter
7000 in Solidarity

OPPOSITION:

For more information, please contact: Kimberly Rodriguez or Alex Salgado, Office of Senator De León, at (916) 651-4022.