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SENATOR KEVIN DE LEÓN PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

SB 695 (De León) Affirmative Consent Education for High School Students

Sofie Karasek, Director of Education and Co-founder of End Rape on Campus said, "Without taking action, more than 100,000 students will be sexually assaulted on college campuses nationwide. By passing this bill to educate high school students about consent, California is taking a critical step towards lowering that number."

Rebecca Levenson, a Parent Adviser to the Berkeley High School Stop Harassing student organization said, "This important legislation recognizes that issues of sexual harassment and assault are not limited to post-secondary institutions. As a mother of a 9th grader deeply affected by these issues, I can only say thank you and please let this be the beginning. What Senators De León and Jackson are doing with their legislation is helping us all remember that the students who perpetrate sexual assault on college campuses all come from one place—High School. Please let this be the beginning of statewide policy strategy that requires districts not to be compliant on paper with Title IX but be compliant in their actions and training requirements."

Sandra Henriquez, Executive Director of the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault said, "SB 695 is an important measure that will help Californians prevent sexual assault before it occurs. By including instruction on sexual assault and dating violence in high school health curricula, we have the opportunity to help students identify and develop healthy, positive relationships and create a culture where violence cannot persist."

Patty Bellasalma, The National Organization for Women California Chapter President said, "By adding instruction in high school that helps young men and women develop healthy and equitable approaches to relationships we are making a much safer and more equitable world."

Avni Parikh, Co-founder of Students for Sexual Respect, a group seeking to create a consent-based culture, said, "It's no longer acceptable to say 'boys will be boys' as an excuse for rape or dating violence. We need to broaden our perspective beyond college campuses."

Liana Thomason, Berkeley High School (BHS) student representing the steering committee of BHS Stop Harassing, a grassroots student-led organization working to change the culture around sexual harassment and violence said, "My fellow seniors and I have received very little education around sexual harassment in high school. Soon, we will go to college, where lack of education means unsafe campuses and increased chances of sexual harassment and assault. SB 695 will allow high school students to become leaders in preventing sexual assault and sexual violence, and nothing is more critical if we want to change the climate of California high schools and colleges."

Savannah Badalich, a student at UCLA and the founder of 7000 in Solidarity who testified in support of SB 967 said, "Consent education in high school health classes is monumental because sexual violence doesn't start on college campuses, it's something that's socialized much earlier. The earlier you start consent education, the easier it will be to create a culture of consent and support, not just on our college campuses but in our larger communities. This legislation is a huge step in helping prevent sexual violence."

Parshan Khosravi, Student Body President at UC Irvine said, "Creation of a culture of consent requires us to educate students early on when they are about to form their understanding of what relationships look like. High school is when students are shaping their values, and what more important of a value than affirmative consent for students to internalize?"

Haley Broder, Former UC Berkeley ASUC Senator, "We must pass this legislation to create a culture of consent and allow high schoolers to learn healthy relationships and further positive change across generations. Senators De León and Jackson recognize the need for affirmative consent education, and the Governor must too. Title IX has been instrumental to building a safer campus, but tangible education is critical to students recognizing and understanding their legal rights. We must educate our students to stand up and show our intolerance to rape culture."

Avni Parikh, San Marino High School Alumni and founding member of Students for Sexual Respect at New York University, "Schools must be viewed as a key actor in helping communities free themselves of societal ills, especially of sexual violence. It is no longer acceptable to say "boys will be boys" as an excuse for any form of sexual harassment and assault. Instead, young people must learn consent, autonomy, and communication between partners in health class. SB695 is helping ensure these ideas are taught well, before it is too late as "44% of rape victims are under the age of 18" (RAINN). Let us hope that this legislation lay a foundation for additional reforms to ensure student health, wellbeing, and safety."