



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

February 20, 2020

Judiciary Committee
New Hampshire State Senate
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Chairwoman Hennessey and Members of the State Judiciary Committee,

I write today in support of Senate Bill 508.

Addressing child abuse remains a major focus of my administration. Legislation that seeks to empower survivors of sexual assault, no matter their age, is essential to protecting New Hampshire's children.

While we are working hard to put an end to child abuse in our state, too many young people continue to experience sexual abuse. Important steps have been taken to improve services and expand resources available to victims and survivors. Nonetheless, the current statute of limitations in civil law includes barriers that prevent survivors from coming forward, paving the way for perpetrators to further their harm. We must create pathways that protect victims and survivors' right to justice. Moreover, we must remove the shields currently protecting perpetrators. Passing SB508 is a step in the right direction.

Countless survivors have shared their stories, which demonstrate the harmful effects our current statute of limitations has as they seek justice and heal from the trauma of their abuse. As the law currently stands, victims bare the financial burden because of their own sexual abuse. It is vital that we move toward a system that shifts cost away from the victim and to the perpetrator. In a world where it takes great courage to come forward about sexual abuse, it is our obligation to protect victims as they share their truth.

I urge this Committee, in addition to the full Senate and the House of Representatives, to consider passing SB508 and embrace civil statute of limitations reform. Such an action will send the message to victims, survivors, and their families that we stand with them, and that we will not allow the law to place a limit on their access to justice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christopher T. Sununu".

Christopher T. Sununu
Governor