



**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 679.

As governor, my administration has worked to combat sexual violence and support survivors. On our college campuses today, too many young people are impacted by rape and sexual assault. In fact, it is estimated that college students are more than four times as likely to be assaulted than any other age group.

In New Hampshire, we know that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men will be sexually assaulted in college. Of these victims, only 12% will report the assault to schools or police. We know from survivors that the fear of being blamed, and the fear of not being believed, are among the top reason why they do not come forward to report their experiences. We also know that many survivors do not receive the supports they need to feel safe on campus, which is why more than a third of survivors drop out of college without completing their degree.

Although New Hampshire leads the nation in terms of its efforts to end sexual violence, our state still has no specific laws in place regarding campus sexual violence. We are falling behind in the area of sexual violence prevention for our students, and we must strengthen our laws to provide survivors with the supports they need and to reduce the prevalence of sexual violence on college campuses. SB 679 represents a critical step forward in the fight against campus sexual assault by ensuring that survivors have increased access to medical care and counseling, developing partnerships between universities and domestic and sexual violence crisis centers, expanding prevention education efforts, and gathering more transparent data on sexual violence.

I urge this Committee, followed by the full Senate and the House of Representatives, to pass this legislation in its strongest possible form, thereby ensuring that students across New Hampshire will have access to the same set of basic protections and services regardless of where they happen to attend school.

I look forward to signing into law a bill that strengthens protections against sexual violence on campus, and sends a strong message that all young people have the right to pursue their education free of fear from rape and sexual assault.

Sincerely,

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

Christopher T. Sununu  
Governor