

TESTIMONY in Support of SB 2972

Submitted to the House Committee on Judiciary

Submitted by: The Title IX Committee of Willamette University, including:

Jackie Balzer, University Title IX Coordinator

Domanic Thomas, Deputy Title IX Coordinator & Senior Associate Dean of Campus Life

Lori Johnson, Director of Rights & Responsibilities (Conduct)

Don Thomson, Director of Health & Counseling

Ross Stout, Director of Campus Safety

Carli Rohner, Advocacy & Prevention Coordinator

Scott Etherton, Director of Housing & Community Life

March 22, 2017

Chair Barker, Vice chair Olson and Williamson, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to you today. We submit our testimony to you as joint members of the Willamette University Title IX committee, a group charged with holistically responding to and preventing violence at our university. Our team is comprised of dedicated practitioners from across campus, varying greatly in our scope and roles related to matters of sexual misconduct. We are entrusted with ensuring that our students who experience violence receive trauma-informed response resources, fair judicial processes (which also applies to students that are accused of sexual misconduct), and coordinate our systems and educational outreach to be informed by current best-practices and federal guidance.

As members of an institution dedicated to addressing issues of sexual violence and misconduct, we enthusiastically support HB 2972. It is our belief that no student should be penalized (or threatened with the possibility of sanctions) for bringing forth a report to the university. We view the requirement of a survivor to participate in a university conduct process to be contrary to best practice in all of our respective fields, not trauma-informed, and most certainly not in the best interest of fostering a university community where student survivors feel encouraged to report, be connected to support resources and have the behavior that has impacted them addressed.

For these reasons, we strongly encourage you to also support HB 2972, and in doing so protecting some of our state's most vulnerable students. Thank you for your time and consideration.