

Chair Lively, Vice Chair Ruiz, Vice Chair McIntire, and members of the House Committee On Higher Education,

I am a college junior in Oregon and a confidential peer advocate for survivors of sexual violence. I am writing to testify in support of HB3456.

As a peer advocate and a friend of survivors, I have come to realize that traumatic experiences impact victims of sexual violence in profound ways that are unfamiliar to so many people. Trauma makes people react in ways that shock and confuse others. For example, imagine someone who recently left an abusive relationship where she was choked without consent by the violent partner, and every time choking happens, the perpetrator wore white gloves. It would make perfect sense for her to be fearful of white gloves since they relate to her painful experience, but to the bystander, her fear would seem random and irrational.

Survivors have special needs that are difficult to understand without training, so intentionality is crucial when it comes to supporting them. HB3456, by providing survivors with confidential advising, gives them a safe, non-judgemental space to express their fear and frustration. It makes a world of difference if even one person hears, understands, and supports them.

I urge the committee to vote HB3456 favorably out of committee and help end the epidemic of campus sexual violence. Thank you very much for your time!