



5/13/2025

Re: HB 3582

To Chair Bowman, Vice-Chair Drazan, Vice-Chair Pham, and Members of the House Committee on Rules,

On behalf of the Oregon National Organization for Women (NOW) Legislative Task Force, we urge your support of House Bill 3582. Oregon law should seek to administer justice rather than act as a barrier. For sexual abuse survivors, seeking that justice should not have a deadline.

Often, survivors must recover from the trauma of sexual abuse, to some extent, before coming forward. Reporting sexual assault can require overcoming a myriad of fears. The fear of retaliation, of not being believed or taken seriously, of being blamed, of financial repercussions, among others can impact the time frame for reporting.

Coming to terms with the emotional impact of facing the abuse often takes time to process. Additionally, childhood sexual abuse can be even more traumatic and can add the additional burden of recognizing that there was indeed an assault. Working through the psychological process can delay a survivor's decision to report an assault.

Distrust in the system, the fear of coming forward then being denied justice, can also be a factor. An artificial, state-created deadline for recovery can surely reinforce this fear. The time frame for recovering enough to face their fear – and to face their abusers – is personal and can vary dramatically.

Some victims pursue civil penalties only after the criminal justice system has failed to deliver appropriate recourse or restitution for victims, delaying the filing of civil cases. It is not unusual for a child sex abuse victim to file in civil court after not receiving recourse via Child Protective Services, family courts, or the criminal justice system. In this situation, their only remaining option is to file in civil court to get the means to pay for the support they so desperately need after abuse. HB 3582 would ensure that survivors can pursue justice on their own terms and allow adequate time to navigate through the justice system.

HB 3582 would also emphasize Oregon's commitment to holding offenders accountable and preventing future assaults. Oregon should send a clear message that sexual violence is not tolerated in our state. There should be no deadline for survivors of sexual assault to seek justice in civil court. There should be no deadline for holding offenders accountable.

Respectfully submitted,

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Members, Oregon NOW Legislative Task Force