

**Ohio House State and Local Government Committee
Proponent Testimony - House Bill 719
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Cleveland Rape Crisis Center
November 27, 2018**

Chairwoman Anielski, Vice-Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Holmes, and members of the Ohio House State and Local Government Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to share written testimony in support of House Bill 719.

Cleveland Rape Crisis Center's mission is to support survivors of rape and sexual abuse, promote healing and prevention, and advocate for social change. We provided services to nearly 10,000 rape and sexual abuse survivors in Cuyahoga, Lake, Geauga, and Ashtabula counties in 2017 and reached an additional 30,000 people with education and prevention programs. Today we are on track to exceed those service numbers for 2018. We have a 44-year history of providing comprehensive healing services to survivors of sexual violence in collaboration with dozens of criminal justice entities at all levels of government.

House Bill 719 is an important piece of legislation that will enhance the experience that survivors have as they navigate their healing process and support the state's efforts to prevent future backlogs of Sexual Assault Kit testing. A statewide Sexual Assault Kit tracking system is essential to ensuring that survivors have anonymous access to information; law enforcement has additional supports for their investigation and prevention efforts; prosecutors are assisted in holding offenders accountable; and that there is increased accountability and transparency for the public.

CRCC is very supportive of House Bill 719, and the companion legislation, Senate Bill 323, which ensures that all agencies involved in the chain of custody of Sexual Assault Kits must participate in the tracking system and that survivors, should they choose, will have anonymous access to information regarding the status and location of their kit.

We have been honored to support Attorney General Mike DeWine's efforts to create a statewide Sexual Assault Kit tracking system through the advisory group and look forward to continuing to support implementation efforts and provide recommendations as the system is established.

I appreciate you taking the time to review my testimony, if you have any questions, please contact me at sondram@clevelandrcc.org or 216-619-6194.