



Student Government Association

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 240
Respect Your Date Act
October 21, 2017

Honorable Mike Duffey
Chair, House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee
77 S. High St
Columbus, OH 43215

Chair Duffey, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Sweeney and members of the House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee,

It is with great honor that we have the opportunity to convey our support of House Bill 240, also known as the "Respect Your Date Act." Sexual violence is a widespread problem for university communities. At Cleveland State University, we regard the protection and well-being of our students as a high priority. No student should ever have to question their safety on their college campus, nor should they feel their voices are neglected should something occur. Every student is entitled to an educational, profitable, and safe college experience free from possible sexual violence.

Dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and rape can hold negative impacts on victims mentally, physically, socially, and emotionally. The effects of these experiences impede on a student's opportunity to learn in a safe college environment while instilling fear of one's surroundings. Ohio's higher education system must take action in order to prevent students from viewing their college campus as a threat, but rather a home embodied with comfort, encouragement and friendship. Cleveland State University perceives the culture of these offenses as undeniably intolerable and will continue to stand by the men and women of this university providing support and resources.

Cleveland State University's Student Government Association expresses its support of H.B. 240. Through the adoption of policy that requires higher education institutions to include procedures for reporting and consequences for committing these incidents, we are better equipped to shed light on this issue. Designating the month of April as "Respect Your Date Month" ultimately increases awareness of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and rape on college campuses and further educates the student body on these matters. Cleveland State University has already implemented the requirements of H.B. 240 on our campus. For example, Cleveland State University covers these topics in our first-year university life courses. These units within the course teach students the vital signs in recognizing sexual abuse, the resources available on campus, and how to address incidents. Nevertheless, our job does not end there.

The provisions in H.B. 240 such as mandatory education with regards to policy on sexual violence and the required record keeping practices by institutions will assist us in putting an end to this widespread concern. The time has come to unite one another in preventing sexual violence at our institutions of higher education in Ohio.

I thank you tremendously for your time, and for your continuous diligence in bettering Ohio each and every day.

Regards,

Signed: *Aeisha Kangan*
Aeisha Kangan, President

Signed: *Cameron Caputi*
Cameron Caputi, Speaker of the Senate

Attest: *Samia Shaheen*
Samia Shaheen, Senator & Member of Policy Committee

Attest: *Maram Eadeh*
Maram Eadeh, Senator & Member of Policy Committee

Attest: *Rachel Iacofano*
Rachel Iacofano, Senator & Member of Policy Committee

Attest: *Nick Fink*
Nick Fink, Senator & Member of Policy Committee

Attest: *Morgan Schultz*
Morgan Schultz, Senator & Member of Policy Committee