

# ASSEMBLY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### ASSEMBLY, No. 4156

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 7, 2015

The Assembly Higher Education Committee reports favorably on Assembly Bill No. 4156.

This bill establishes a task force to study and make recommendations concerning sexual assault occurring on the campuses of institutions of higher education in the State. The task force will be comprised of the following 12 members: the Secretary of Higher Education, the Attorney General, and the Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, or their designees; five members appointed by the Governor, including a representative of the State colleges and universities, a representative of the public research universities, a representative of the county colleges, a representative of the independent colleges and universities, and a representative of the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault; and four public members to be appointed by the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the General Assembly, the Minority Leader of the Senate, and the Minority Leader of the General Assembly. The public members will include at least one individual who is a campus sexual assault survivor.

The task force will study and evaluate current policies and practices concerning campus sexual assault, identify problems and areas for improvement, and make recommendations concerning campus sexual assault prevention, response, and awareness. More specifically, the task force will:

- gather information from the public institutions of higher education and from a sample of independent institutions of higher education in the State regarding their policies and procedures for addressing campus sexual assault, and review and evaluate those policies and procedures;
- review current New Jersey and federal laws regarding campus sexual assault;
- review and evaluate existing research and literature, including any national best practices, professional standards, or guidelines, regarding the prevention of, and response to, incidents of campus sexual assault; and
- consult with, and evaluate testimony from, campus sexual assault survivors and advocates who provide support services to campus sexual assault survivors.

In addition, the task force will develop and issue recommendations and guidelines regarding campus sexual assault prevention and awareness, and regarding protocols for responding to reports of campus sexual assault and providing victim support services. The task force is required to issue a final report to the Governor and the Legislature within one year of its organization, which contains the task force's findings and recommendations concerning campus sexual assault.