

Survivor Outreach and Support (“SOS”) Campus Act Summary

Senator Barbara Boxer

Campus sexual assault has reached epidemic levels in our country. Nearly one-in-five female students has been sexually assaulted while in college, while male students face a greater than one-in-twenty chance of the same victimization. Although universities have been trying to stem the tide of this epidemic for years, we must do better to protect our young people.

The **SOS Campus Act** requires every university receiving federal funding to designate an advocate for campus sexual assault prevention and response. The advocate is independent of the university and must report to someone outside the university’s sexual assault adjudication chain of command. Wherever a conflict exists between the university’s interest and the victim’s interest, the advocate must side with the victim. The advocate’s duties are:

Services:

- The advocate must ensure that victims of sexual assault at the university receive these services, with the victim’s consent, regardless of whether the victim reports the sexual assault: information on how to report a campus sexual assault to law enforcement; emergency medical care; medical forensic or evidentiary examinations; crisis intervention counseling and ongoing counseling; information on the victim’s rights and referrals to additional support services; and information on legal services.
- These services may be provided by the university in consultation with local rape crisis centers or through contracts (to include transportation services) with local rape crisis centers and other community organizations within a reasonable distance.
- Victims may not be retaliated against for reporting sexual assault to the advocate.

Guidance and Support:

- The advocate must guide victims of sexual assault who request assistance through the reporting, counseling, administrative, medical and health, academic accommodations, or legal processes of the institution or local law enforcement; and
- The advocate must attend any university adjudications related to the sexual assault as an advocate for the victim if the victim requests.

Privacy:

- The advocate must maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the victim and any witnesses of a sexual assault on campus and shall not disclose any identifying information to the university, subject to state law.

Notification and Public Information Campaign:

- A university employee who receives a report of sexual assault must notify the victim of the existence of, contact information for, and services provided by the advocate.
- The advocate must conduct a public information campaign to inform students of the services it provides.
- The advocate must submit an annual internal report to a supervisor on how she or he used resources and how many victims were assisted.

The **SOS Campus Act** does not alter universities’ obligations under the Clery Act or Title IX obligations.

This legislation is supported by the University of California; the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence; the National Women’s Law Center; Savannah Badalich, Founder of UCLA’s 7000 in Solidarity: A Campaign Against Sexual Assault; Break the Cycle; Jewish Women International; American Association of University Women; and Legal Momentum.

To cosponsor this legislation or with any questions, contact Lucy Panza at Lucy_Panza@boxer.senate.gov or 4-4314.