

**Statement of Yale University Concerning  
HB 6890, “An Act Requiring Best Practices by Institutions of Higher Education  
in Response to Reports of Sexual Assault, Stalking or Intimate Partner Violence.”**

Senator Haskell, Representative Haddad, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to comment on H.B. 6890, “An Act Requiring Best Practices by Institutions of Higher Education in Response to Reports of Sexual Assault, Stalking or Intimate Partner Violence.” Yale commends the Committee for its continued interest in preventing and responding to sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct has no place in the Yale community, and the university is committed to maintaining best practices and refining available resources aimed at preventing and responding to sexual misconduct.

Yale has adopted policies and procedures that seek to raise awareness and change campus culture in the hope of creating a fully-inclusive campus and preventing instances of sexual misconduct. Yale also takes very seriously all allegations of misconduct and has put in place extensive support and response resources for students, faculty, and staff who come forward. The university offers opportunities for informal resolution as well as formal disciplinary procedures.

Among its prevention and awareness efforts, Yale requires annual training for students, faculty, and staff called “Preventing and Responding to Sexual Misconduct.” This training outlines Yale’s policies, campus resources, reporting mechanisms, and general strategies for prevention and response. In addition, Yale provides multiple options and venues for supplemental training, including bystander intervention workshops for every constituency in the university. Yale has trained undergraduates to serve as Communication and Consent Educators (CCEs) who lead workshops, trainings, and informally engage with peers to prevent sexual violence, promote bystander intervention, and help Yale be a place where everyone can thrive.

Yale’s Title IX Coordinators, a group of senior administrators and faculty, meet with students, faculty, and staff in order to answer questions about discrimination on the basis of sex or gender or sexual misconduct, inform community members about their options for resolving complaints, investigate complaints and ensure that the university responds effectively, and more. Each school within Yale – Yale College, the Graduate School, and the twelve professional schools – has at least one Title IX coordinator.

The university offers multiple avenues for students seeking support or informal resolution of complaints. Yale’s SHARE Center, a 24-hour direct hotline and office with weekday drop-ins, offers professional counseling and assistance for members of the Yale Community who have experienced sexual misconduct.

Additionally, the Yale Police Department works closely with the New Haven Police Department, the New Haven State’s Attorney, the SHARE Center, and Title IX coordinators to respond to reports of sexual misconduct. The Yale Police Department can perform full criminal investigations, in addition to providing information on assistance services, safety planning, and related issues.

The University-Wide Committee on Sexual Misconduct addresses allegations of sexual misconduct and is available to students, faculty and staff across the university. The Committee provides an accessible, representative and trained body to answer inquiries, and fairly and expeditiously hear formal

complaints of sexual misconduct. The Committee consists of students, faculty and administrators drawn from throughout the university.

While protecting the privacy of the individuals involved in cases of sexual misconduct, Yale seeks to be as transparent as possible to the community and provides a semi-annual report to the campus offering both statistical and descriptive summaries of all complaints brought to the university's attention during the preceding six-month period. Yale also participated in the 2015 Association of American University's campus climate survey, which collected original, informative data about students' experiences of sexual misconduct at Yale. The university is currently collecting follow-up data through the second survey led by the Association of American Universities.

We respectfully urge the Committee to proceed cautiously as it considers whether additional legislation is needed. All of the colleges and universities in Connecticut work very hard to protect the welfare of all members of their campus communities. Each institution also strives to maintain full compliance with federal and state standards. As Members of the Committee know, the federal rules are in flux because the U.S. Department of Education has issued a notice of proposed rulemaking to amend federal regulations implementing Title IX. The Department will not conclude its deliberations on the draft rules until late in 2019 or even early in 2020. The university is concerned that further amendments to state law while federal standards are under review could create confusion on campuses and could impede efforts to implement thoughtful policies and develop key resources for our campus community. We therefore urge the Committee to wait on new legislation until the direction of federal standards is more clear.