



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Sara Conrad

775-828-1115 ext. 15

communications@ncedsv.org

NCEDSV Posts 2019 Legislative Priorities and Successful Session Advocacy

RENO, Nev. – July 30, 2019 Two bills requested by the Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence, a statewide organization providing advocacy, education and support to the front-line organizations that help those impacted by domestic and sexual violence, went into effect as of July 1. Both bills increase protections and support victims of domestic and sexual violence.

The first, Assembly Bill 134, was authored by Assemblywoman Shea Backus, who represents District 37. The bill expands advocate privilege, which ensures that any communications between a survivor of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, and human trafficking and their victim advocate remains confidential, to include campus and tribal based advocates. These advocates were not included when advocate privilege was originally granted in 2003.

“AB 134 is ensuring that all communications are privileged so that advocates are able to provide the best care to survivors and that survivors feel safe disclosing and sharing personal information with their advocate,” Serena Evans, NCEDSV policy specialist said.

The second, Senate Bill 332, authored by Senator Heidi Seevers-Gansert of District 15 in Washoe County, and requested by NCEDSV, will require that the Interim Legislative Committee on Education will study K-12 and higher education to ensure that the learning environment is free of bullying, cyber-bullying and discriminatory harassment. Discriminatory harassment means the discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry or gender identity or expression. We are particularly concerned about the erosion of Title IX protections.

“Currently in Nevada there is no uniform response to sexual harassment in our schools, which allows each school to respond to reports of sexual harassment or sexual assault in their schools in very different ways,” Evans said. “This study will hopefully be able to produce best practices and legislative recommendations for the upcoming 2021 Legislative Session.”

Assembly Bill 176, authored by Assemblyman Steve Yeager of District 9 in Clark County, and supported by NCEDSV, enacts the Sexual Assault Survivors Bill of Rights.

“First and foremost, AB 176 provides survivors undeniable rights,” Evans said.

“Additionally, aside from establishing rights for survivors AB 176, provides funding for sexual assault service providers. Sexual Assault programs currently receive no state funding, and AB 176 is going to grant \$300,000 over the biennium to recruit and train sexual assault advocates across the state.”

Sections of the bill went into effect July 1, others become effective upon passage and approval for adopting regulations, January 1, 2020; and final sections become effective January 2, 2021.

According to Evans, the Survivors Bill of Rights also establishes the Advisory Committee on the Rights of Survivors of Sexual Assault through the Office of the Attorney General. This committee is tasked with researching and making recommendations around the need for additional services within the state, what rights need to be expanded and collecting data on sexual assault.

“The Sexual Assault Survivor Bill of Rights brings light to a topic that has been in the shadows for far too long, it lets survivors know that we see them and respect them, and requires the state to do the same,” she said.

Evans said NCEDSV also provided assistance with AB 124, authored by Assemblywoman Connie Munk of District 4 in northwest Las Vegas. AB 124 will require all hospitals and emergency clinics to provide all survivors of sexual assault with written information about follow up medical care including emergency contraception, prophylactic medications, STI testing, and community resources about advocacy and counseling services.

“What we often see is that following the immediate shock of a sexual assault, survivors often go to an ER or emergency clinic to receive medical care,” she said. “In Nevada a sexual assault forensic medical exam, which is the medical exam that is conducted by a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) when a survivor wants to report the assault to law enforcement is only offered at six locations throughout the state.”

Many survivors choose not to report and undergo the forensic medical exam, Evans said, which means they are often not connected with an advocate who can provide information about the follow up medical care and community resources.

“Requiring all emergency medical clinics and hospitals to provide written information will ensure that all survivors of sexual assault will receive this vital information and can visit the information later on when they may be in a better mind set,” she said.

To download a copy of the NCEDSV’s 2019 legislative priorities, [click here](#). To learn more about the organization’s advocacy, education and research, visit www.ncedsv.org.

#

About NCEDSV

The Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence (previously The Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence), provides statewide advocacy, education and support to the front-line organizations that help those impacted by domestic and sexual violence.