



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kenneth P. LaValle

## Senator Ken LaValle Releases Report Concerning Sexual Violence On College Campuses

KENNETH P. LAVALLE October 7, 2014

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION**

October 7, 2014 – Today, Senator Ken LaValle announced the release of his report concerning sexual violence on college campuses. Senator LaValle, Chairman of the NY Senate Higher Education Committee, has long been recognized for his awareness and legislative action concerning this pervasive problem. In May of this year, he assembled a round table of experts to revisit current approaches and existing laws to discover where additional actions were necessary.

Senator LaValle said, “This report is the culmination of the roundtable, input from those involved in the process, and a careful review of existing laws and regulations. We need to take actions to further protect our college students from sexual violence. I will be introducing legislation focused on safeguarding everyone on campuses.”

The new report reviews current relevant state and federal laws and research, discusses best practices of colleges and makes 14 recommendations for state legislative action.

Key Findings from the Senator’s “Sexual Violence on College Campuses” report research include:

- Sexual assault vastly under-reported (Only 5 percent report to law enforcement)
- Alcohol involved in nearly 80 percent of campus sexual assaults
- Majority of college sexual assaults happen off-campus (60 percent)

Important Legislative Recommendations are:

- Better enforcement of campus policies on underage drinking
- Expand use of sexual assault nurse examiners for forensic evidence collection
- Improve the education concerning current law standards and adopt a clear definition of consent for colleges
- Standardize college disciplinary proceedings and protect due process rights

On May 20<sup>th</sup> of this year, Senator LaValle, Chairman of the Senate Higher Education Committee, convened Legislators, college and university officials and security personnel to discuss sexual violence on campus to identify issues and to develop solutions. The roundtable discussions included the prevalence of rape and sexual assault on college campuses, current practices, existing support systems and potential solutions to stop these crimes. The hearing ended with general agreement that actions should be taken to break the current trends as soon as possible. Senator LaValle's report is the result of the round table combined with subsequent discussions and research.

Senator LaValle has been instrumental in the fight against sexual misconduct on campuses for decades. In 1990, after holding hearings throughout New York State, Senator LaValle authored a NY State Law to require colleges and universities to provide incoming students with information concerning laws, penalties, and the procedures in effect for dealing with sex offenses on campuses. The new law also required colleges and universities to establish qualified advisory committees to review policies and procedures for: educating the campus community about sexual assault, personal safety and crime, counseling victims of the crimes, reporting complaints to appropriate authorities, and responding to inquiries from concerned persons. The committee must also report annually, in writing, to the college President or chief administrative officer. This law has been in effect since 1991.

Senator LaValle's "Sexual Violence on College Campuses" report is available for download below: