



February 29, 2024

The Honorable Omar Fateh, Chair
Senate Higher Education Committee
3219 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Zach Duckworth, Republican Lead
Senate Higher Education Committee
2229 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Fateh, Republican Lead Duckworth, and Members of the Committee:

Students United is the statewide student association representing all future, current, and former Minnesota State students attending the seven Minnesota State universities: Bemidji State University, Minnesota State University – Moorhead, Minnesota State University – Mankato, Metropolitan State University, Southwest Minnesota State University, St. Cloud State University, and Winona State University.

Students United has long sought for survivors of sexual assault and misconduct to be central in the decision-making and advocacy process. This is why we're honored to support Senator Lindsey Port's [SF 1045](#).

This bill will establish student-focused best practices, bolster resources, remove barriers to reporting, and empower, support, and care for survivors. Senator Port's legislation sends a clear message to students, faculty, and staff: sexual misconduct and assault will not be tolerated, and we will stand with survivors.

Student-Focused Best Practices

We are pleased that SF 1045 recognizes that incidents often happen beyond or outside the immediate institution-owned facilities. Nonetheless, survivors deserve institutional support and resources when responding to these traumatic experiences.

Students United also appreciates that the bill requires campus security personnel to study and learn about the dynamics of sexual assault, neurobiological responses to trauma, and best practices for preventing, responding to, and investigating sexual assault.

Bolster Resources & Remove Barriers to Reporting

As an organization, we recognize that students are often dissuaded from reporting incidents of sexual misconduct or assault for fear of retribution or because of the barriers that exist. Fortunately, SF 1045 would address these issues.



First, SF 1045 ensures that institutions cannot condition financial aid on signing nondisclosure agreements and protects a survivor's right to disclose information related to the incident. Second, Senator Port's bill makes an effort to shield survivors from unwanted contact with alleged assailants by supporting survivors' right to alternate accommodations, whether in housing or academic settings. SF 1045 would also allow survivors to transfer to other institutions, safe in the knowledge that they will continue to be afforded resources and care.

Empower, Support, and Care for Survivors

Finally, Senator Port's SF 1045 establishes common sense, yet much-needed, guidelines for investigator-survivor interactions. Specifically, the bill prevents authorities from victim-blaming or survivor-shaming throughout the process. This ensures that all survivors will be treated with basic dignity and respect.

In closing, Minnesota's higher education institutions should be places of respect and dignity and foster opportunities for personal and professional growth. Campus safety and students' well-being are essential to achieving this end. For these reasons, we stand with Senator Port's SF 1045 and urge members to support this legislation.