



## Kriss Worthington

Councilmember, City of Berkeley, District 7  
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### ACTION CALENDAR

September 17, 2013

*(Continued from September 10, 2013)*

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Kriss Worthington

Subject: Support Survivors of Sexual Violence by Sending a Letter to the Department of Education to Protect Assaulted Students, and Support Local Sexual Assault and Awareness Day

### RECOMMENDATION

Send a letter to the Department of Education in support of the recent petition that urges the Department of Education to hold Universities accountable to Title IX and support sexually assaulted students, and support local sexual assault and awareness day.

### BACKGROUND:

In order to organize against sexual violence in Berkeley, we are working on a September 21 event, in collaboration with many organizations including BAWAR, ASUC, RAINN, and Take Back the Night. This sexual assault awareness and education day will consist of numerous workshops designed to create a safe space to discuss sexual assault in our community. There will be workshops on rape culture, self care, supporting survivors, men in sexual assault spaces, and rape myths. Please join us on September 21.

Current statistics state that 1 in 4 women will experience attempted or completed rape, and 1 in 7 men will experience sexual assault, before graduating college. Unfortunately, students are often silenced and ignored when they try to report their incident and receive campus services. Many individuals have been forced to compromise their educational opportunities in order to be safe, for example, some have dropped one or more classes to avoid their perpetrator, and others have dropped out of school entirely.

A recent petition started by a group of survivors and allies, urges the Department of Education to become more active in their responsibility to protect survivors of sexual assault, and work to prevent further cases on campus. The petition states:

“In 1972, Congress passed Title IX of the Education Amendments, the landmark civil rights legislation that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and guarantees students the fundamental right to education free from sexual violence and harassment. Among other responsibilities, schools must combat abuse, provide fair grievance procedures, and

accommodate survivors' needs. Yet over 40 years later, little has changed and the violence continues...In the last few years, the OCR (Office for Civil Rights) has investigated formal student complaints and identified flagrant Title IX violations at Tufts, the University of Wisconsin, Harvard, Georgetown, and many other colleges- but none of these schools have faced a noncompliance finding, let alone substantive sanctions"

Supporting this petition, by sending a letter to the Department of Education, shows Berkeley's commitment to equal opportunity for education, and demonstrates the city's advocacy for sexual assault survivors and students across the nation.

The link to the petition is <http://www.change.org/EdActNow>

FISCAL IMPACTS:

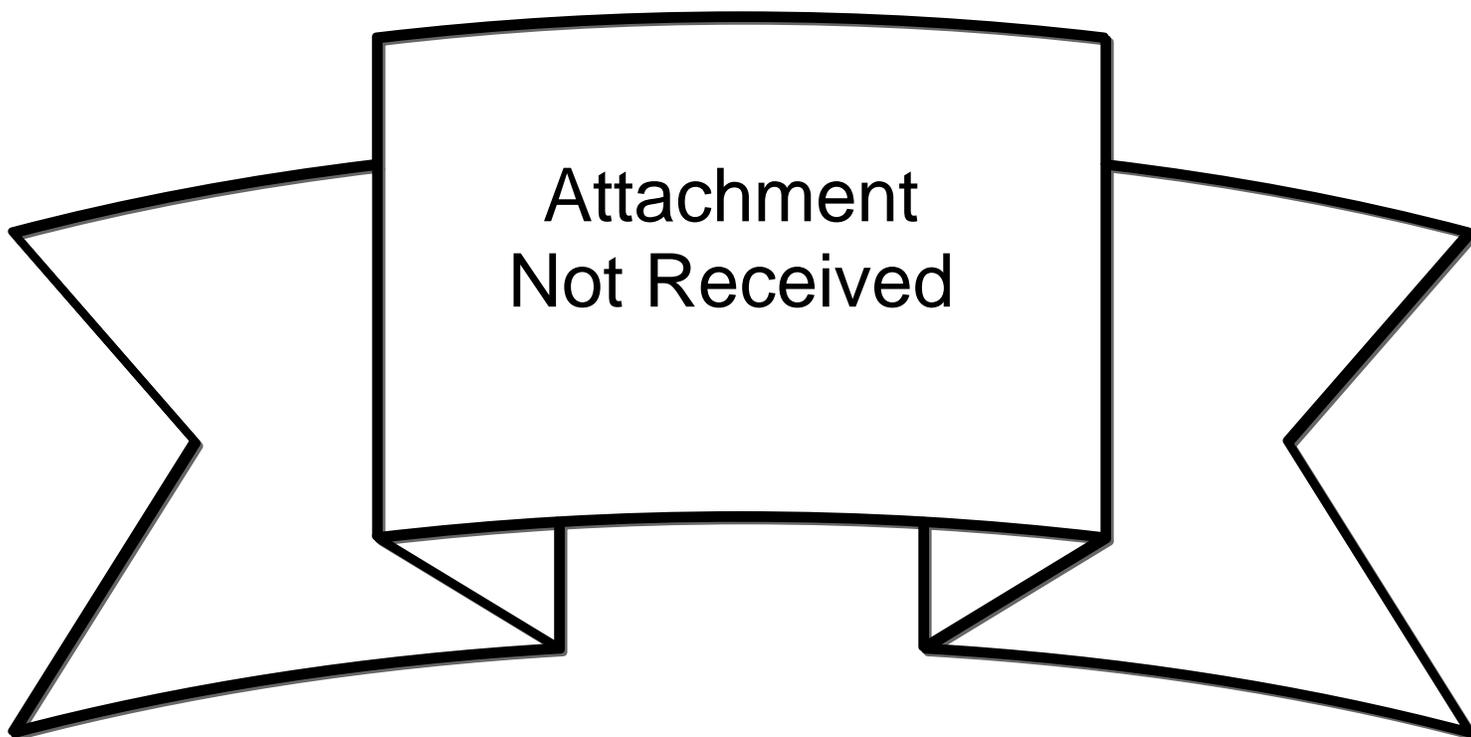
None.

CONTACT PERSON:

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Attachment:

1. Letter to Department of Education



Attachment 1 to this report has not been received from the submitting department.

**City Clerk Department**  
2180 Milvia Street  
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(510) 981-6900

**The City of Berkeley, City Council's Web site**  
<http://www.cityofberkeley.info/citycouncil/>

