



SEPTEMBER 2020 | FACT SHEET

Resources for Transforming Anti-Harassment Policies in Your State and Community

In just the three years since millions said “me too,” **over 230 bills** have been introduced in the states to strengthen protections against workplace harassment and a remarkable **19 states** have enacted new protections. Policymakers at the state and local level are also increasingly working to address harassment in schools, especially as the U.S. Department of Education rolled back protections for student survivors. And, pushed by students, many school districts and higher education institutions are adopting policies to continue supporting student survivors despite the Department’s harmful new Title IX rule. But there is still much work to be done. Nineteen states is not enough and many new reforms need to be strengthened. Survivors have a key role to play in making the change we need.

Below are resources to help you push for change in your community and examples of how survivor-, student-, and worker-led advocacy is transforming state and local policies.

Resources to Advocate for Change at the State and Local Level

- **LEARN WHAT REFORMS ARE MOVING IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND WHAT MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE:**
 - [Progress in Advancing MeToo Workplace Reforms in #20StatesBy2020](#) (NWLC)
 - [Women’s Agenda Policy Hub](#) (ERA)
 - [State Playbook for Gender Equity; Strengthen Protections Against Workplace Sexual Harassment](#) (NWLC)
 - [The Schools Girls Deserve](#) (GGE)
 - [DeVos’ New Title IX Sexual Harassment Rule, Explained](#) (NWLC)
 - [Hands Off IX: Title IX Under Trump Toolkit](#) (KYIX)
 - [Let Her Learn: Stopping School Push Out for Girls Who Have Suffered Harassment and Sexual Violence](#) (NWLC)
 - [How Comprehensive Sexual Health Education Can Reduce Sexual Harassment](#) (GGE)
 - [Dress Coded: Black Girls, Bodies, and Bias in D.C. Schools](#) (NWLC)
 - [Suspending Self Expression: Punishing Girls of Color in NYC Schools through Dress Code Enforcement](#) (GGE)
- **TAKE ACTION:** [Tell your state legislator](#) to commit to supporting survivors and strengthening protections against sexual harassment and violence at work, in schools, homes, and communities.
- **JOIN THE STOP HARASSMENT STATE NETWORK** for organizations and advocates who are pushing for stronger anti-harassment protections in their state to connect, collaborate, and learn from each other about policies, research, and campaigns for strengthening state-level protections against harassment and sexual violence at work and in schools (email pwitherspoon@nwlc.org to learn more).
- **GET DIRECT POLICY SUPPORT FROM THE STATE POLICY RAPID RESPONSE TEAM**, which provides policy guidance and timely technical support to advocates and lawmakers as questions arise related to workplace and school anti-harassment policy efforts in the states (email questions to StatePolicyRRT@equalrights.org).
- **FOR INDIVIDUALS LOOKING TO TAKE ACTION**, the Network and Rapid Response Team can help connect you to advocacy groups and efforts in your state.

How Survivors, Students, and Workers are Advocating for Change in their Communities

THE ¡YA BASTA! MOVEMENT: ENDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST JANITORS

The ¡Ya Basta! movement developed in response to a 2015 documentary, *Rape on the Night Shift*, that brought into the public consciousness what too many janitorial workers already knew: industry conditions, including isolated work environments and language barriers, made these workers – many of whom are immigrant women – especially vulnerable to abuse. Janitorial workers within SEIU-USWW who identify as survivors, organized to demand change within their union and workplaces. Subsequently, the ¡Ya Basta! coalition came together to support this worker-led organizing, composed of an array of labor and survivor advocacy organizations.

The worker leaders, supported by the ¡Ya Basta! coalition, pushed for legislation requiring janitorial employers to register with the state and provide biennial in-person sexual harassment-prevention training with worker input, or risk losing their ability to operate in California. Workers testified in support of the bill, organized rallies across the state, put up billboards, and participated in a hunger strike at the Capitol. The governor signed the legislation in 2016, but it soon became clear that more was needed to ensure that trainings were trauma-informed, industry-specific and effective. So the workers pushed for legislation to require trainings be conducted through a peer-to-peer, or promotoras, education model. In 2018, 100 janitors marched 100 miles to Sacramento to pressure the Governor to sign the legislation. In 2019, the bill was signed into law. **To connect with and learn more from the ¡Ya Basta! worker leaders, email vlagunas@yabasta.org.**

THE NEW YORK SEXUAL HARASSMENT WORKING GROUP

In 2018, seven former New York state legislative employees who experienced, witnessed, or reported sexual harassment while working in the legislature came together to form the Sexual Harassment Working Group and demand change. The Working Group held strategy sessions, conducted research, and organized a broad coalition of civil rights, women's rights, girls' rights, and transgender rights advocates as well as workers' rights litigators. From that organizing, the Working Group published public policy recommendations for protecting New York employees—both public and private—from harassment and called for a public hearing to provide stakeholders, especially survivors, an opportunity to utilize the most powerful tool of all to push for change – their lived experiences.

On February 13, 2019, the New York legislature held its first joint public hearing on sexual harassment in over 27 years. Dozens of witnesses signed up to testify, including the Working Group, and the hearing lasted 11 hours. This hearing, followed by a second hearing that May, a lobby day, press conferences, and a roundtable discussion of proposed reforms with legislators, led to the passage in August 2019 of a suite of reforms to prevent and respond to workplace discrimination. **To connect with and learn more from the Sexual Harassment Working Group, email SexualHarassmentWorkingGroup@gmail.com.**

TENNESSEE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CREATE DISTRICT'S FIRST TITLE IX POLICY

In 2019, a coalition of high school students in Shelby County, Tennessee wrote a letter to their school district with a sample new sexual harassment policy. After numerous private and public meetings with the student coalition, the district agreed to hire a Title IX coordinator and implement a policy prohibiting sex discrimination for the first time in its history. Shortly after, the Department of Education issued a Title IX rule with severe consequences for K12 student survivors. In response, the student coalition issued new demands, including creating a 60-day timeline for proceedings, supportive resources for survivors, and a separate policy to address sexual violence that is not covered by the Title IX rule. The coalition hosted teach-ins for students and parents and enlisted individual school administrators to sign on to their demands. Because of student activism, the district again agreed to meet their demands. **To learn more about launching a campaign in your school district, visit www.knowyourIX.org or reach out at info@knowyourIX.org.**

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ADVOCATE FOR BLACK WOMEN AND NONBINARY SURVIVORS

Black Survivors Coalition (BSC) came together at Georgetown University to advocate for Black women and nonbinary survivors in the fall of 2019 through their #GeorgetownDoesntCare campaign. BSC first took action by delivering a demand letter to the Office of the President in January 2020 outlining 10 specific demands, including calls to hire a Black clinician and provide a 24/7 crisis response center. In response, the university reached out to other Black student leaders, instead of the BSC organizers, with vague promises and no tangible steps they would take to meet BSC's demands. After months of attempting to work with school administrators, student organizers staged a sit-in and occupied the lobby of the President's office. Following a 76-hour sit-in and five consecutive days of negotiations with school administrators the university agreed to meet BSC's demands. **To learn more about launching a campaign at your college or university, visit www.knowyourIX.org or reach out at info@knowyourIX.org.**

STANFORD UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ORGANIZE AGAINST NEW TITLE IX RULE

When the Department of Education announced a harmful proposed Title IX rule, Stanford students Krithika Iyer, Maia Brockbank, and Julia Paris launched Sexual Violence Free Stanford to help students submit individual comments to the Department and join a campus-wide comment, which garnered 1,100+ signatures. After the final Title IX rule was released, the coalition worked to improve Stanford's new Title IX policy, including by coordinating a six-day campaign that led to 120+ student comments and 1,300+ petition signatures. As a result of these efforts, Stanford's policy now allows parties to jointly waive their right to cross-examination; ensures free legal aid for all survivors, even if they do not attend a live hearing; uses more comprehensive definitions of sexual misconduct; and provides amnesty to survivors who violate Stanford's COVID-19 policy during their assault. The coalition has also supported the campus movement to defund Stanford police, engaged in legislative lobbying, and coordinated with the National Student Alliance Against Sexual Violence (NSAASV), a network for survivor advocates across 100+ institutions. **To learn more, visit [@SVFreeStanford](https://svfreestanford.org) or join [NSAASV](https://nsaasv.org).**