

FEEDBACK

Hurting rights of campus sex-assault victims

Your July 23 editorial "College sex assaults: Right cause but wrong leader," suggests that New Jersey's colleges and universities should be "required to report every sexual assault allegation to the local prosecutor's sex crimes unit." This suggestion overlooks an important right belonging to victims of sexual assaults.

The New Jersey Campus Sexual Assault Victim's Bill of Rights Act (N.J.S.A. 18A:61E-1 et seq.) — which has been on the books since 1994 — gives victims of sexual assaults the right to be free from pressure from campus personnel "to report crimes if the victim does not wish to do so." This right extends to victims of sexual assaults that occur on the campus of any public or independent college or university in New Jersey and where the victim or alleged perpetrator is a student, or when the victim is a student involved in an off-campus sexual assault.

The New Jersey Task Force on Campus Sexual Assault recently released its report, which included several excellent recommendations. The state colleges and universities join the task force in its aim to "enhance the safety of students on campus, assist students affected by sexual violence, and create healthier campus communities built on respect."

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