



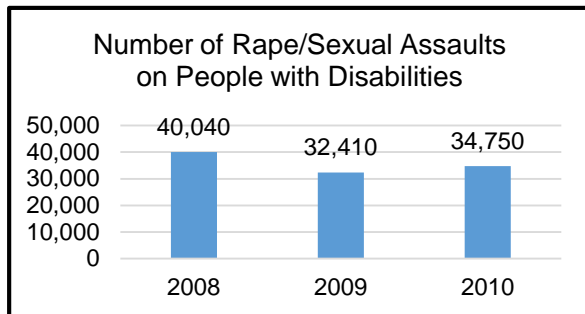
March 24, 2017

RE: LB 107 (SUPPORT)

Dear Senators:

Studies consistently demonstrate that people with disabilities are sexually victimized more often than others who do not have a disability¹. One study reported that 25% of girls and women with intellectual disability who were referred for birth control had a history of sexual violence² while other studies suggest that 49% of people with an intellectual disability will experience 10 or more sexually abusive incidents³. Any type of disability appears to contribute to a high risk of victimization but intellectual disability, communication disorders, and behavioral disorders appear to contribute to higher risk; having multiple disabilities results in even higher risk⁴.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that people with disabilities of all ages experience a significant number of sexual assault/rape and people with disabilities between ages 16 to 19 experience higher rates of violent victimization (rape, sexual assault, robbery, and simple/aggravated assaults) than their peers without disabilities⁵.



Violent victimization rates per 1,000			
Age 16-19			
	2008	2009	2010
Persons with Disabilities	85.9	68.2	65.1
Persons without Disabilities	34.3	28.6	26.7

¹ Furey, E. (1994). Sexual abuse of adults with mental retardation: Who and where. *Mental Retardation*, 32, 3, p. 173-180.

² Sobsey, D. (1994). *Violence and abuse in the lives of people with disabilities: The end of silent acceptance?* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

³ Sobsey, D. & Doe, T. (1991). Patterns of sexual abuse and assault. *Sexuality and Disability*, 9 (3), 243-259.

⁴ Sullivan, P.M. & Knutson, J.F. (1994). *The relationship between child abuse and neglect and disabilities: Implications for research and practice*. Omaha, NE: Boys Town National Research Hospital.

⁵ Bureau of Justice Statistics, October 2011, "Crime Against Persons with Disabilities, 2008-2010 - Statistical Table", available at <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/capd10st.pdf>.

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Perpetrators are often those who are known by the victim, such as family members, acquaintances, residential care staff, transportation providers and personal care attendants. Overwhelmingly, abusers are known and trusted by the victim who has an intellectual disability: in 32 percent of cases, abusers consisted of family members or acquaintances while 44 percent had a relationship with the victim specifically related to the person's disability such as residential care staff, transportation providers and personal care attendants⁶. Due to threats by the abuser, victims with disabilities may never report the abuse, especially if the abuse is committed by an authority figure whom they learn not to question, and are rarely educated about sexuality issues or provided assertiveness training.

Disability Rights Nebraska supports LB 107 and recommends that the bill be advanced.

⁶ Balderian, N. (1991). Sexual abuse of people with developmental disabilities. *Sexuality and Disability*, 9(4), 323-335.