

2019-20 Policy **Successes**



The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape is thankful to the state legislature for their work to pass more than a dozen sexual assault-related bills in 2019-20. Below is a list of some of the bills PCAR advocated for on behalf of survivors and their loved ones.

★ **Priority Bill**

Expand Access to justice for victims of child sexual abuse	✓ HB 962 ★ Reform Statutes of Limitations Representative Rozzi Eliminates in certain cases, and extends the criminal and civil statutes of limitations for sexual offenses. Expands the rights of victims between ages 18 and 23 to seek justice in both criminal and civil courts. The bill also expands the Victims Compensation Assistance Program to provide funds for counseling and therapy. ✓ HB 1051 ★ Hold mandated reporters accountable Representative Stephens Increases penalties for mandated reporters who willfully fail to report child sexual abuse. ✓ HB 1171 ★ Protect one's ability to report abuse Representative Toohil Stops non-disclosure agreements that bar victims from reporting to law enforcement.
Criminalize sexual extortion	✓ HB 1402 ★ Representative Nesbit & Representative McClinton Establishes sexual extortion as a crime with appropriate penalties. This bill is a model for the nation because it includes harm toward victims and their loved ones as well as monetary extortion that often accompanies coercion of a sexual nature.
Expand victims' options	✓ SB 399 ★ Senator Langerholc Amends the Sexual Assault Testing and Evidence Collection Act to establish greater consistencies for victims, expands victim rights and the notification of such rights, extends the preservation of evidence to the duration of the Statute of Limitations, and ensures victims have access to a sexual assault counselor from a local rape crisis center.
Strengthen victims' rights within criminal proceedings	✓ HB 502 Provide access to victims to watch court proceedings Representative Hershey Amends the Crime Victims Act to allow victims to watch court proceedings via telecommunications. ✓ HB 504 Prohibit a victim's past sexual victimization or past allegations from being admitted as evidence Representative Mihalek Past sexual victimization or past allegations are prohibited from use as evidence.

Strengthen victims' rights within criminal proceedings



SB 469

Help victims or witnesses with intellectual disabilities or autism testify in court

Senator Laughlin

This bill creates another avenue for victims and witnesses with intellectual disabilities or autism testify in court proceedings.



SB 479

Allow statements by child victims or witnesses to be admissible in court

Senator Baker

This bill allows for statements by child victims or witnesses for crimes such as sexual offenses, assault, or kidnapping.



SB 276

Constitutionally protect the rights of victims through Marsy's Law

Representative Delozier

Marsy's Law amended the constitution to specify protected rights for victims and protection from harassment or retaliation from the accused.

Campus sexual assault options



Act 16 (HB 1615) ★

Representative Turzai; Originally sponsored by Senator Baker

Require post-secondary institutions to establish online, anonymous reporting options for victims and bystanders to report sexual misconduct.

End child marriage



HB 360

Representative Topper

Ends child marriage by now requiring that both consenting parties be over the age of 18; previously child marriage typically involved the force or coercion of a teenage girl (some as young as 12) into marrying an older man

Parental rights



HB 1984

Representative Benninghoff

Allows the victim to terminate the parental rights of a rapist over a child(ren) conceived as the result of rape.

Questions?

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