

Agenda Item 1160

TESTIMONY

10:45 AM TIME CERTAIN

NO FORM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE SHOULD BE TOLERATED IN PORTLAND RESOLUTIONIF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, **PRINT** YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.NAME (**PRINT**)ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE (*Optional*)Email (*Optional*)

declined	Robert west		
nothere	Jessie Sponberg		
✓	DAVID DAVIS		

Moore-Love, Karla

From: Rebecca Nickels <rebecca@calltosafety.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 18, 2016 11:26 AM
To: Moore-Love, Karla
Cc: Hanson, Laura
Subject: Letter in support of resolution against sexual violence
Attachments: 10.18.16 Letter to City Council re SV Resolution.pdf

Ms. Moore-Love (cc: Laura) –

Attached is a letter in support of the resolution introduced by Commissioner Novick's office, standing in support of survivors of sexual assault and rape. Please submit my letter into the record for the October 19, 2016 Council meeting. Please let me know if there is any additional information you need from me. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Rebecca

Rebecca Nickels | Executive Director | 503.872.8627
www.calltosafety.org | PO Box 42610, Portland, OR 97242
CRISIS LINE: 503.235.5333 or 1.888.235.5333



Formerly the Portland Women's Crisis Line



Everyone deserves a life free
of domestic and sexual violence.

October 18, 2016

Dear members of the Portland City Council,

This letter is in response and support of the resolution before you that "no form of sexual violence should be tolerated and that Portland City Council stands in support of survivors of sexual assault and rape." We'd like to thank Commissioner Novick and his staff for bringing this resolution before the Council, and we trust that each of you hold a personal dedication to seeing it put into action. We greatly appreciate the invitation to attend today's Council meeting in support of the resolution, but respectfully decline in support of our local Black Lives Matter activists who have been forcefully removed from recent City Council meetings.

In 1972, a small group of Portland women in their early 20's wanted to make sure that resources for survivors of sexual violence existed in our city. They began by asking an existing nonprofit that served women to expand their mission and create a crisis line. They were told quite explicitly by that organization's executive director that "polite women don't talk about rape." These young women eventually created their own nonprofit, and the seed that became Call to Safety was planted.

Now, 44 years later, it is clear that we still have no reason to be polite about rape, sexual assault, and all the other microaggressions that make up the continuum of sexual violence. Sexual violence impacts at least one in four women and one in 10 men during their lifetimes, and the subsequent trauma must be integrated into an individual's reality for years to come. After experiencing sexual violence, a survivor often feels a sense of shame and can carry responsibility for what happened to them. This happens, in part, because we live in a rape culture; a culture that perpetuates sexual violence, holds survivors accountable for maintaining their own safety, and excuses the behavior of perpetrators under the mentality that "boys will be boys." You can't see rape culture very clearly -- but when you're a woman, a person of color, a trans or gender nonconforming person -- you know it's all around you.

At Call to Safety, we provide non-judgemental and anonymous support for survivors of sexual violence through our 24/7 crisis line, on-going case management, in-person hospital response, and support groups. In 2016, we've already provided case management to over 100 survivors of sexual violence and answered approximately 1,400 calls from survivors of sexual violence on our crisis line.

The City Council's resolution will help to set a precedent that our community is putting an end to rape culture and denouncing all forms of sexual violence. It will demonstrate to survivors that their emotional and personal safety is a priority, and that as a community, we believe them. Thank you for prioritizing this issue and being part of the solution.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Nickels, MSW
Executive Director