

Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault: Education Department Falls for Rape Myths

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Madison – September 8, 2017 – The Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault denounces U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos' announcement yesterday of the administration's new direction on Title IX, concerning sexual violence in schools and on college campuses.

"Secretary Betsy DeVos' speech illustrates that the administration has fallen for sexual violence perpetrators' and rape apologists' faulty claims — long debunked by research — of rampant false accusations," stated Pennie Meyers, executive director of the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA). "Secretary DeVos' apparent belief in rape myths underlies her misguided statement yesterday drawing false equivalence between students experiencing an alleged lack of due process and students who have been raped."

False accusations account for only [2-8%](#) of reports, on par with other crimes. Yet rape survivors face nearly universal disbelief, shame, intimidation and worse.

In addition, the vast majority of sexual violence survivors never see justice served. That is why Title IX is so important, and why the Education Department should improve upon, not replace, the department's [2011 Dear Colleague Letter](#) to colleges and universities. Widely supported by survivor and advocacy groups, the letter provided comprehensive information to survivors, school administrators, and other parties, clarifying schools' responsibilities under Title IX.

Also see statements from [Know Your IX](#), [End Rape on Campus](#), [American Association of University Women](#), [YWCA](#), [American Federation of Teachers](#), and the [Feminist Majority Foundation](#).