

From: Tricia Fechter Gates
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To: T9PublicHearing
Subject: Written Comment for Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 Public Hearing

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Submitted via
T9PublicHearing@ed.gov

June 11, 2021

The
Honorable Miguel Cardona
Secretary

Department
of Education
400
Maryland Avenue SW
Washington,
DC 20202

Suzanne
B. Goldberg Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Department of Education 400
Maryland Avenue SW Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Cardona and Acting Assistant Secretary Goldberg:

As an association dedicated to inclusiveness and human dignity,

ACPA - College Student Educators International supports the many calls for action regarding Title IX's ability to continue effectively protecting victims and survivors of sexual assault. Protections were rolled back under the Trump administration that are still in effect that result in structural barriers on the part of victims and survivors when coming forward with their stories.

While new regulations regarding Title IX were announced by the

Department of Education, we remain steadfast in our position that our primary focus remain on ensuring fairness for all students in the process, for responding to and handling sexual assault cases, and for responding with care and concern to the needs of the

victims. We know that sexual assault remains a significant issue on our campuses.

As representatives of student affairs leaders and college student

educators, ACPA stands with the community of advocates for victims and survivors of sexual violence, and we strongly encourage continued institutional support for the rights and human dignity of students.

We understand that there is a lot of anxiety about the technical

aspects of hearings, cross-examinations, and the process; however, it does not hinder our ability to be effective stewards in addressing and resolving these concerns.

We are also aware that the new regulations affect our member

institutions in distinct ways. It is imperative that institutions ensure that their policies and procedures reflect their own values while abiding to the technical requirements that are now being required.

This

is not the first time that higher education has faced governmental regulations that make our work more difficult, but we need to ensure that our focus remains on the students we serve and how we can ensure that students feel comfortable in reporting sexual assault, that they can receive the support that they need, and that processes are fair and objective in holding perpetrators accountable for their actions.



Tricia Fechter Gates, Ph.D., CAE
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she, her, hers

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