



March 1, 2017

The organizations listed above urge you to support legislation which extends the timeline to file certain suits related to sex offenses. There is no clear reason to limit the amount of time a victim has to come forward in cases where children are sexually assaulted. Eliminating the statute of limitations allows victims an opportunity to bring their abusers to justice.

Too often we see victims of childhood sexual abuse who, when they are able to come to terms with their abuse and are in a position where they can disclose it/pursue legal action, are unable to do so because of a statute of limitations placed on legal action. This protects the abuser by giving them cover. Children are often afraid of further harm or unable to speak up about their abuse.

Upon implementation this legislation, S.809, will allow victims who are under the age of 18 when the abuse occurs to have the option of filing charges at any time in the future. Additionally, it will create a one year window to file a civil suit or criminal charges for those who are currently barred from doing so due to the current statute of limitations. This legislation also levels the playing field for victims regardless of where the offense occurred.

For certain crimes, like rape, victims are able to bring charges forward without any restrictions on the amount of time that has passed since the crime. Child sexual abuse is a severely underreported crime. People who sexually abuse children are trusted not only by the children they harm, they are often trusted and respected members of their communities. They can have any relationship to the child. This can include an older sibling or playmate, family member, a teacher, a coach, a caretaker, or the parent of another child. According to the Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN), as many as 93 percent of victims under the age of 18 know their abuser.

Our organizations, representing New Yorkers from across the state, urge you to support this legislation and insist it be voted on by both houses before the end of the 2017 legislative session. For more information, please do not hesitate to reach out to Saima Anjam, NYSCADV's Director of Public Policy at [Sanjam@nyscadv.org](mailto:Sanjam@nyscadv.org) or 518.482.5465x201.

Sincerely,

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