



LOUISIANA SENATE

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SEXUAL ASSAULT WORKING GROUP HOLDS SECOND MEETING

LEGISLATION TO BE INTRODUCED IN THE 2015 SESSION WILL FOCUS ON CLIMATE SURVEYS, THE ROLE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT & IMPROVED PREVENTION

BATON ROUGE, LA - District 3 State Senator JP Morrell (D-New Orleans) on Tuesday said climate surveys and law enforcement training are critical to improving sexual assault policies on Louisiana college campuses and should be addressed through legislation. The Senator and other members of the Sexual Assault Working Group met for the second time this week to receive reports from its subcommittees – the campus climate survey subcommittee, the best practices subcommittee and the current policies subcommittee – and from the recently formed Board of Regents’ working group.

While the reports touched on many important issues surrounding campus sexual assault, the working group focused its discussion on two critical policy areas - campus climate surveys and law enforcement training. Sen. Morrell said both issues should be addressed through legislation.

“A statewide, anonymous campus climate survey is crucial to understanding the scope of sexual assault and to properly address the problem on college campuses in Louisiana,” said Sen. Morrell. “It is also essential to ensure that law enforcement and other individuals investigating and adjudicating sexual assault cases have proper training. Mandating training and climate surveys through legislation will be the most effective way to produce results and will ensure that these policies are not abandoned in the future.”

Sen. Morrell said that he plans to continue working with the group and with the Board of Regents to draft legislation to be introduced during the 2015 Regular Legislative Session to address these issues.

“I look forward to working with other members of this panel and with the Board of Regents’ working group on substantive policy developments,” Sen. Morrell said.

Sen. Morrell formed the Sexual Assault Working Group in response to a survey done by the Board of Regents at his request. The survey collected a wide range of data disclosing the number of sexual assault incidents reported, number of sexual assault investigations conducted and the written policies governing sexual assault at each Louisiana college and university. The group is comprised of legislative, governmental, education and non-profit leaders from around the state and country. The goal of the group is to develop sexual assault policy recommendations and craft legislation to improve response and prevention of sexual assaults at public colleges and universities.

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