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Democratic Women's Caucus Leaders Stand with Jane Doe in Cornell Case; Slam Trump & Republicans for Gutting Title IX Protections

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Today, the Democratic Women's Caucus Chair Teresa Leger Fernández (NM-03) and Vice Chairs Emilia Sykes (OH-13) and Hillary Scholten (MI-03) released the following statement standing in solidarity with Jane Doe, who was allegedly gang-raped while enrolled at Cornell University and whose case has garnered [significant media attention](#) due to the failure of law enforcement and the university to protect her. The Members also call on the Trump administration to strengthen and expand Title IX protections:

“What happened on the Cornell University campus is disgusting and vile: seven men are accused of pressuring a 20-year-old woman to snort ketamine before raping her for seven hours and inviting their fraternity brothers to join. There was no formal criminal investigation and only two of the men were expelled. The reporting shows that the police did not believe the young woman and failed to conduct an adequate investigation following her reporting of the alleged rape. Although we are glad to see the Tompkins County District Attorney has reopened the case after failing to investigate in 2024, we recognize that more must be done to fix the system that failed this college student.

The details of this case are hard to digest, but cannot be ignored. We have been sounding the alarm on the threat to women's safety in every aspect of life, from the workplace to college campuses. There is a pervasive culture that condones sexual misconduct, violence and assault on college campuses, on the Hill, in the military and across our country. Her story should be a wake-up call Republicans cannot ignore: we need stronger protections and systems for survivors,

and we need to act now. We have an obligation to not only hold perpetrators accountable, but to make sure women and girls always have the resources they need to seek justice.

The first step is to strengthen and expand Title IX protections. However, Trump and Congressional Republicans have done the opposite. Just yesterday, [Trump and Republicans eroded the processes in place for sexual misconduct investigations](#). Since the start of the second Trump administration, the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), which handles sexual abuse claims, [has not entered into a single resolution agreement, despite hundreds of pending cases involving student survivors](#).

If Republicans cared about the safety of women they would not only restore Title IX, but expand and strengthen protections. The DWC has repeatedly [blasted Secretary of Education Linda McMahon](#) and [Republicans in Congress](#) for their attacks on Title IX and has [fought for the expansion](#) of protections for student survivors.

Our hearts break for Jane Doe at Cornell University as she navigates this case and tries to heal. We stand with you. This widespread culture of sexual violence must end. We are calling on the Trump administration and Republicans to condemn what took place at Cornell, stand in solidarity with Jane Doe, and work with us to better protect survivors and ensure they can seek justice. It is the least you can do.”

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