

# KNOW YOUR IX

Empowering students to stop sexual violence

September 9, 2016

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown  
California State Capitol, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: AB 2888 (Low)**  
**VETO REQUEST**

*Via email:* leg.unit@gov.ca.gov; Daniel.Seeman@gov.ca.gov

Dear Governor Brown:

As student survivors of gender violence and their allies, we respectfully request that you veto AB 2888, which would institute a mandatory minimum sentence for any defendant found guilty of sexually assaulting an unconscious or intoxicated person.

We know firsthand that the consequences of rape are no less damaging for a victim who is unconscious than for a victim who is not. We also know that mandatory minimum-term laws are a harmful, mistaken solution to our rightful anger over the Brock Turner case and the many others like it.

Over the latter half of the 20th century, mandatory minimum laws have led to overly punitive sentencing and prison overcrowding. While some support this legislation in hopes that it will address racial biases in sentencing that worked in Turner's favor, mandatory minimums have in fact *exacerbated* racial and class disparities in prosecution. Further, mandatory minimums can deter victims—the vast majority of whom were assaulted by a friend, partner, or family member—from reporting an assault and seeking resources. When survivors do come forward, mandatory minimums deter prosecutors from pressing charges against particular defendants—namely those who, like Turner, are white and wealthy—and make juries less likely to convict. Furthermore, mandatory minimum laws have failed to reduce assault. (Indeed, studies show that the *severity* of sanction does not deter violence.)

There are better ways to address our disgust with the Brock Turner decision and our unjust criminal legal system than to expand those very injustices. The undersigned organizations have proposed many solutions to support survivors without relying on counterproductive mandatory minimum laws.

Accordingly, we, the undersigned survivors and allies, support Brock Turner's victim, whose experience with the criminal legal system has hit close to home for so many of us, and ask that you veto the bill, AB 2888, that has been passed in our name. For an updated list of signatures, please visit [www.knowyourIX.org](http://www.knowyourIX.org).

Sincerely,

ACT for Women and Girls

American Association of University Women, Weber State University

American Constitution Society, Yale Law School

Associated Students Women's Commission, University of California, San Diego

Campus Assault Response, James Madison University

Columbia Law Women's Organization (CLWA), Columbia Law School

Functional Immediate Response Student Safety Team (FIRSST), Goshen College

Greeks United Around Respect and Discussion of Sexual Assault, Valparaiso University

Know Your IX

MenCanEnd, The University of Texas at Austin

National Alliance to End Sexual Violence

National Council of Jewish Women, California

National Lawyers Guild, Yale Law School

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence

Our Harvard Can Do Better, Harvard University

Positive Women's Network – USA, California

Prevention Intervention Network, Goshen College

Sexual Empowerment and Awareness at Tennessee, University of Tennessee

Social Justice Club, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

Speak Up, Stay Strong, York College of The City University of New York

Student Government, Lake Forest College

Title IX at Northwestern, Northwestern University

UChicago Clothesline Project, University of Chicago

UltraViolet

URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity