

Bipartisan "Stop Campus Hazing Act" Passes House, Advances to Senate

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WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, September 25, 2024 / EINPresswire.com/ -- In a significant step toward addressing the dangers of hazing on college campuses, the bipartisan [Stop Campus Hazing Act](#) (H.R. 5646, S. 2901) has passed the House of Representatives and is now moving to the Senate for consideration. Co-led by Representatives Lucy McBath (D-GA) and Jeff Duncan (R-SC) in the House and Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Bill Cassidy, M.D. (R-LA) in the Senate, the bill represents a unified, bipartisan effort to improve campus safety nationwide.



Legislators, families, and advocates pose after the House vote

The Stop Campus Hazing Act builds on the momentum of two previous bills—the Report and Educate About Campus Hazing (REACH) Act and the End All Hazing Act—to create a more comprehensive approach to preventing and reporting hazing incidents. Over 50 organizations, including [Clery Center](#), [StopHazing](#), SAFE Campuses, LLC., the American College Health Association (ACHA), the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (AFA), the Association of Fraternal Leadership & Values, and the Anti-Hazing Coalition, have endorsed the bill.

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Jessica Mertz

Since 2017, Clery Center has played a key role in shaping

federal anti-hazing legislation, driven by the advocacy of board members Julie and Gary DeVercelly, whose son Gary DeVercelly Jr. was tragically killed by hazing in 2007. “Over the past

35 years, the Clery Act has fundamentally transformed campus safety by requiring crucial measures to improve transparency and prevent harm,” said Jessica A. Mertz, executive director of Clery Center. “The passage of the Stop Campus Hazing Act marks a significant milestone in our ongoing mission to create environments that prioritize the safety and well-being of the campus community. Today, we not only honor the many lives lost to hazing, but we recognize the harmful impact that hazing culture continues to have across the country.”

The Stop Campus Hazing Act will amend the Clery Act by introducing three critical requirements for institutions of higher education (IHEs):

- Hazing Reporting: IHEs must report known incidents of hazing in their Annual Security Report and submit these statistics annually to the Department of Education.
- Transparency Report: IHEs must maintain a publicly accessible transparency report, detailing their hazing policies and listing organizations that have violated those policies.
- Prevention Programs: IHEs are required to offer research-informed, campus-wide hazing prevention programs.

“Policy is a vital component of harm prevention, and I’m confident this research-informed bipartisan bill will make a substantial difference in transforming campus hazing culture,” said Elizabeth J. Allan, Ph.D., Professor of Higher Education at the University of Maine and Principal at StopHazing. “Research shows that many students are uninformed about hazing, so I’m especially encouraged that the bill includes a requirement to educate students about the dangers of hazing.”

Additionally, the bill will rename the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act to the Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act to reflect its broader scope, which now addresses hazing as part of campus crime prevention.

This legislation has been shaped by the tireless advocacy of families who have lost loved ones to hazing. Members of Congress who supported the bill have often been personally touched by these tragedies in their districts, including the co-leads, Representatives McBath and Duncan.

"[This bill is] about empowering students and families so that they can make an informed decision for themselves about what school they or their loved one attends or the club they may join and hopefully save their lives.," said Representative McBath. "I know the pain of losing a child. The only thing that we can do now is try to harness our pain and do something positive with it."

The Stop Campus Hazing Act now moves to the Senate, where it is expected to garner further bipartisan support. Advocates are hopeful that the bill will continue its momentum and reach President Biden's desk for signing into law.

“Hazing has almost become an acceptable part of college culture,” said Representative Thompson during the House Committee on Education & the Workforce Markup. “Let me be clear

today: Those days are over.”

Kristen Sweeney

Clery Center

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