

The Connecticut General Assembly



For IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 8, 2018

Contact: Tess Koenigsmark
860-240-8790

Rep. Linehan to Submit Legislation Strengthening Sexual Harassment Laws

Proposals endorsed by Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

State Rep. Liz Linehan (D-Cheshire/Southington/Wallingford) announced that she will be submitting a bill in the 2018 legislative session to strengthen Connecticut's sexual harassment statutes. The proposals are a result of collaboration with the state's Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO), which enforces the state's anti-discrimination laws and investigates discrimination complaints.

"The 'Me Too' movement has forced our society to confront the epidemic of sexual harassment and assault and the many ways in which we fail victims. As someone who was sexually assaulted in the workplace years ago and punished for speaking out, it's incredibly important to me that we prevent what I went through from happening to others," **Rep. Linehan** said. "This legislation came out of my own experience, listening to other victims' stories, and in-depth discussions with the staff at CHRO. These are deficiencies in our current law that they, as an agency that deals with sexual harassment complaints daily, have identified in the course of their work."

"This is an important cultural moment. The state of Connecticut should not miss this opportunity to strengthen its sexual harassment laws and make them more effective," said CHRO Executive Director Tanya Hughes.

The legislation will incorporate several measures, including:

- Strengthening victims' rights, including protecting his or her position with a company following an incident of harassment, and their ability to collect damages
- Expanding mandatory workplace sexual harassment trainings to more clearly specify what constitutes harassment

- Lengthening the time a victim has to file a sexual harassment complaint from 180 to 300 days, moving Connecticut more in line with neighboring states

The statute of limitations for filing a sexual harassment complaint is 300 days in Massachusetts and one year in both Rhode Island and New York.

The legislation will be submitted to the Labor and Judiciary Committees. In even-numbered years, legislators can't individually introduce legislation, but must ask a legislative committee to raise their bill.

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