



November 20, 2013

The Honorable Barbara Jones, Chair
Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel
Department of Defense
875 N. Randolph Street
Arlington, VA 22203-1995

Sent via email: [REDACTED]

Dear Chairwoman Jones:

The National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NAESV) is the voice in Washington for 56 state and territorial sexual assault coalitions and 1300 local rape crisis centers working to end sexual violence and support survivors. Thank you for the invitation to submit comments to the panel.

After much thoughtful deliberation on the current debate in Congress and before the panel, NAESV believes that utilizing independent, specially trained prosecutors to pursue these cases is an essential component of reducing retaliation, increasing reporting, and responding to the expressed needs of survivors. Sexual assault within the military continues to occur at alarming levels with 26,000 anonymously reported incidents in 2012 alone according to Department of Defense (DoD) estimates. During this same period, only 3,300 service members reported their assaults. Combined with the heart-wrenching stories of survivors, these facts reveal the depth of the problem of military sexual assault (MSA) and demand incisive action.

Sexual violence is an endemic and epidemic social problem in our nation. The victim blaming attitudes of the civilian world carry into military service, and those attitudes carry over into tours of duty. The military has embraced the role of being a standard bearer of discipline, honorable action and integrity. An opportunity exists to restore that integrity.

Any solution to this problem must be multifaceted, and NAESV offers a number of policy suggestions in our [position statement on military sexual assault](#). Thank you again for the opportunity to submit comments for the record.

Sincerely,

Monika Johnson Hostler
Board President

National Alliance to End Sexual Violence

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