

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 29, 2018

The Honorable Gene Dodaro
Comptroller General of the United States
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

We write to request that GAO conduct a comprehensive review of surveys that collect data on the incidence of sexual violence on college campuses. Specifically, we ask that GAO conduct an analysis of past and existing surveys and provide recommendations to Congress for developing and administering a standard nationwide survey to collect data on campus sexual assault.

A safe campus environment free from sexual assault is essential to ensure that all students can pursue higher education. Achieving this goal requires accountability from colleges and universities that receive federal funds and a well-developed standardized survey will ensure that we have accurate data on the scope of the problem. It is estimated that one in five women are victim to sexual assault, but without uniform standards for data reporting and collection, we cannot be sure about such statistics.

In order to get a broad understanding of the various methodologies and structures of existing surveys, GAO should study past and existing campus climate surveys and assess their effectiveness in gathering complete and accurate campus sexual violence data. The surveys studied for the report should address the following issues:


- Student perspectives on the incidence and prevalence of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking on the college campus;
- Student knowledge about institutional policies and procedures related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and how the policies are communicated;
- The utility and efficacy of making survey data available to the general public;
- For students who have been victims of sexual assault,

- a. whether the incident was reported, to whom, what response was received, and whether the victim was made aware of state, local, national and campus resources;
- b. contextual factors such as whether force, incapacitation or coercion was involved;
- c. whether the accused individual was a student at the institution; whether or not a victim reported an incident to state, local, or campus law enforcement and why.

The resulting report should include recommendations in response to these questions, as well as administration, frequency, and any other relevant factors GAO considers necessary to create a strong national campus survey.

Thank you for your attention to this important request. We look forward to hearing your response.


Sincerely,



Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Susan A. Davis
Member of Congress