

**From:** Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi <Jennifer@respectabilityusa.org>  
**To:** Mayer, DougDougMayer@gov.sc.gov  
**Date:** 10/14/2016 1:01:17 PM  
**Subject:** Has someone you love been raped or sexually abused?

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This message contains graphics. If you do not see the graphics, [click here to view](#).

Hello Doug,

This is a hard topic. But given the news cycle and numerous people sharing their own experiences via social media, as well as my own personal experience, I feel compelled to bring it up.

Children with disabilities are three times more likely to be victims of rape or sexual assault than children without disabilities. Victims of assault are more likely to commit crimes. Every nine minutes an adult with a disability is sexually assaulted or raped. Rape and sexual assault – no matter if the victim is a person with or without a disability – is not OK.

I know this personally. When I was 12 years old, due to my dyslexia, I could not really read or write. I had stopped growing, so I was already 5'10 and looked a lot older than my actual age. But I was illiterate. People called me “stupid,” “idiot,” “lazy,” “disappointing” and worse. Beginning in elementary school, I was bullied physically and verbally at school. When I was 12 years old, I trusted someone at school who made me feel “accepted” and special. I wound up getting raped.

I blamed myself and did not report it at the time. For decades I did not discuss it. Like many other people, I was touched or grabbed in public, once on a bus and another time on a subway. For many years, I worked to help crisis centers but did not go public with my own story. But it is far too common to stay silent. And all this press coverage is triggering a lot of feelings in a lot of people who this happened to as well. Rape and sexual assault is a lot more common than most people think. It happens to children, women and men.

If you or someone you care about needs to talk about their experience with someone, contact [www.RAINN.org](http://www.RAINN.org) or call them at 1-800-565-HOPE. That's 1-800-565-4673. Their website is screen reader accessible and they are completely set up to accommodate and serve people who are hearing impaired.

If you or a loved one is thinking of committing suicide, call a free national suicide prevention hotline at 1-800-273-8255.

If you are looking for political candidates who care about these issues, questions 10 and 11 of our nonpartisan candidate questionnaires specifically address these issues. See where candidates for president, governor and senate stand on these issues here: [#PwDsVote 2016 Disability Questionnaire Responses](#).

We addressed these issues in our landmark report, [Disability & Criminal Justice Reform: Keys to Success](#). It is vital that our leaders around the country address these issues immediately.

You are not alone.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi

P.S. Read the links below to see what the candidates are saying on these issues. RespectAbility and The RespectAbility Report are nonpartisan and do not endorse candidates. The questionnaire is purely for educational purposes.

State	Gubernatorial Candidate	View Full Answers
Delaware	Colin Bonini (R)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteBonini">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteBonini</a>
Missouri	Chris Koster (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteKoster">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteKoster</a>
Montana	Greg Gianforte (R)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteGianforte">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteGianforte</a>
New Hampshire (lost primary)	Derek Dextraze (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteDextraze">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteDextraze</a>
Oregon	Bud Pierce (R)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVotePierce">http://bit.ly/PwDsVotePierce</a>
Utah	Mike Weinholtz (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteWeinholtz">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteWeinholtz</a>
Vermont	Sue Minter (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteMinter">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteMinter</a>
Vermont	Phil Scott (R)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteScott">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteScott</a>
Washington	Bill Bryant (R)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteBryant">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteBryant</a>

State	Senate Candidate	View Full Answers
Alabama	Ron Crumpton (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteCrumpton">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteCrumpton</a>
California	Kamala Harris (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteHarris">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteHarris</a>
California	Loretta Sanchez (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteSanchez">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteSanchez</a>
Florida (lost primary)	Dwight Young (R)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteYoung">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteYoung</a>
Illinois	Tammy Duckworth (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteDuckworth">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteDuckworth</a>
Illinois	Mark Kirk (R)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteKirk">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteKirk</a>
Kansas	Patrick Wiesner (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteWiesner">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteWiesner</a>

Louisiana	Foster Campell (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteCampbell">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteCampbell</a>
Louisiana	Caroline Fayard (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteFayard">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteFayard</a>
Louisiana	Abhay Patel (R)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVotePatel">http://bit.ly/PwDsVotePatel</a>
Maryland	Kathy Szeliga (R)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteSzeliga">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteSzeliga</a>
Maryland	Chris Van Hollen (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteVanHollen">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteVanHollen</a>
Missouri	Jason Kander (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteKander">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteKander</a>
Nevada	Joe Heck (R)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteHeck">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteHeck</a>
Nevada	Catherine Cortez Masto (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteMasto">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteMasto</a>
New Hampshire	Kelly Ayotte (R)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteAyotte">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteAyotte</a>
New Hampshire	Maggie Hassan (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteHassan">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteHassan</a>
North Carolina	Richard Burr (R)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteBurr">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteBurr</a>
North Carolina	Deborah Ross (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteRoss">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteRoss</a>
Oregon	Mark Callahan (R)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteCallahan">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteCallahan</a>
Pennsylvania	Katie McGinty (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteMcGinty">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteMcGinty</a>
South Dakota	Jay Williams (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteWilliams">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteWilliams</a>
Vermont	Patrick Leahy (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteLeahy">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteLeahy</a>
Wisconsin	Russ Feingold (D)	<a href="http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteFeingold">http://bit.ly/PwDsVoteFeingold</a>

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