



**Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee Hearing  
A2167 – Law Enforcement Training  
May 11, 2017**

I'm Patricia Teffenhart, the Executive Director of the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault, representing the twenty-one county-based rape crisis centers and the Rutgers University Office of Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance.

I want to thank you, Chairman Benson, for giving me an opportunity to join you here today and for considering A2167. In short, A2167 gives us a chance to strengthen current efforts to expand sexual violence training for members of our law enforcement community.

Current policy requires only that law enforcement personnel receive sexual violence training during their time in the Academy. In response, NJCASA has had the pleasure, over the last three years, of working with the Attorney General's office on the creation and facilitation of a day-long sexual violence training symposium and now is enjoying the opportunity to work with the New Jersey State Police to create new training content on the issue.

A2167 strengthens the impact of those efforts by ensuring that critical first responders are receiving up-to-date training content to help New Jersey best serve survivors and hold offenders accountable. It simply ensures that training is received, at minimum, every-other-year, and provides great deference to the Attorney General's office to determine the content and quantitative hours necessary to ensure a well-informed response.

What we know to be true is that the FBI recognizes rape as the second most violent crime – the first of which is murder. We also know that while violent crime rates are on the decline in New Jersey, the recently released 2015 Uniform Crime Report shows yet another consecutive year of increased reports of sexual assault.

Passing A2167 addresses a current gap in training, provides for experts to determine implementation, but is also responsive to the reporting trends – all in an effort to help New Jersey keep our communities as safe as possible.

I thank you again for the opportunity to speak before you today, and for all you do to advance the principles of justice and safety throughout New Jersey.

*Testimony respectfully submitted by:  
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