Current law provides sexual violence survivors with a limited window (two years) to bring civil action against their abusers. This is incongruent with the severity of the crime and the impact of trauma. Over the past three years, New Jersey has made substantive changes to law and policy to better serve survivors of sexual violence. Making common-sense changes to the civil statute of limitations is the next logical step to best serve every survivor in New Jersey.

1. **Increase** the civil statute of limitations

2. Allow survivors of sexual assault to bring civil action when they are comfortable to do so

3. Create laws that acknowledge and are consistent with the known impact of sexual trauma

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**Sexual violence has an emotional, physical, and financial impact.**

Sexual abuse has a negative impact on survivors' educational attainment, later job performance, and earnings (MacMillan, 2000, Anda et al., 2004).

The lifetime financial burden for survivors of sexual violence is estimated to be $122,461 per victim (Peterson, DeGue, Florence, & Lokey, 2017).

Civil suits hold abusers accountable directly to survivors, rather than the state.

Civil litigation for survivors of sexual abuse forces perpetrators and those who caused the abuse to pay for the harm they caused or permitted (sol-reform.com/data/).

The FBI recognizes rape as the second most violent crime - the first of which is murder.

But the following crimes currently have a longer civil statute of limitations than rape in New Jersey:

- Property damage (6 years)
- Trespassing (6 years)
- Fraud (6 years)
- Contracts violations (6 years)

**A two year statute of limitations fails to acknowledge the impact of trauma.**

A survey of adult survivors of child sexual abuse found almost half did not tell anyone for over a year (Smith et al., 2000).

Between delays in reporting due to trauma, wait times for services, and other considerations, a two year statute of limitations can expire before a survivor feels ready to pursue that option.

There is no criminal statute of limitations for sexual assault in N.J.

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