Dear Senator/Representative (locate your legislator at <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/LSOWEB/LegInfo.aspx> ,

 I would like to personally thank you, as a member of the Wyoming legislature, for passing the Sexual Assault Protection Order bill. This new law is a step in the right direction to helping victims of sexual assault in our state.

 I am also writing to you to share my concern of a culture that exists in Wyoming, which allows sexual violence to happen. This cultural belief is based, in part, on not wanting to believe sexual violence occurs in our communities. *(This may be a good place to add statistics from your community/county).* The cultural belief that allows sexual violence to happen is also based on a lack of knowledge about the issue itself and a lack of understanding as to how we, as a society, can prevent it. For example, the American public overestimates the percentage of sexual assault reports to be false. In reality, methodological research estimates the percentage of false reports to be around 2-8% (Lonsway, Archambault, & Lisak, 2009). When we fail to take action because we are afraid we are causing harm to the “alleged” perpetrator, not only are we blaming the victim and ignoring the trauma of the victim, but we are also sending a message that it is okay to perpetrate sexual violence and easy to get away with it. Additionally, the few individuals who do perpetrate sexual assault do so more than once and, in some instances, serially (Lisak, 2011). With this understanding, we have the potential to prevent future sexual assaults from happening if we hold a perpetrator accountable in the first place.

*(This may be a good place to share*

*a personal story about sexual violence)*

 The Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (WCADVSA) currently has a prevention campaign entitled BE THE SOLUTION. The WCADVSA developed this campaign to raise awareness among Wyomingites that sexual violence is a problem in our state, and that there are actions we can take to prevent it. Violence is a learned behavior that can be unlearned or not learned in the first place. By starting conversations with young children and throughout their lifetime about healthy sexuality, healthy relationships, respect and consent, we can create a culture in which prevention of sexual violence is the norm.

 I encourage you to take the time to learn more about sexual violence in Wyoming and in your community by calling [*(your local domestic violence and sexual assault program)*](http://www.wyomingdvsa.org/#!domestic-violence-sexual-assault-pgms/cn8v) or the WCADVSA, and by visiting [**www.bethesolutionwyo.org**](www.bethesolutionwyo.org). *(Insert local dvsa program name)* has BE THE SOLUTION campaign materials. Please show your support by reaching out to *(local dvsa program or any other community partner)* and find out how you can BE THE SOLUTION to prevent sexual violence.

Additionally, I hope that you will talk to your colleagues about sexual violence, how it is mis-perceived across Wyoming, and steps we can take to prevent it. In the end, I hope that through these actions, you as a policy maker will be able to support change at the policy-making level when bills related to sexual violence come across your desk.

 Preventing sexual violence in Wyoming takes more than one legislator, program, teacher, or adolescent. It takes all of us learning about sexual violence, talking to one another, and collaborating to make change to create a culture of safety, equality and respect in Wyoming. You are the solution when you learn about sexual violence, talk about it and make change.

Respectfully,

Name

City