

# United States Senate

March 31, 2020

The Honorable Betsy DeVos  
Secretary of Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos,

We write to express our strong opposition to plans by the Department of Education (ED or Department) to release the final rule on Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 (Title IX) that was proposed originally on November 16, 2018. In the midst of the growing outbreak of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19), while schools are grappling with how to maintain basic services for and supports to their students, it is wholly unacceptable for the Department to finalize a rule that fundamentally will change the landscape of how schools are required to respond to incidents of sexual harassment and assault, and we urge you to reconsider this misguided plan.

K-12 schools and institutions of higher education face unprecedented uncertainty about the end of this school year and the start of the next school year. The federal government should be doing everything possible to help them navigate these uncertain times. To ask K-12 schools and institutions of higher education to implement in this moment of crisis and extreme uncertainty a rule that, as proposed, would force them to significantly alter how they handle allegations of sexual harassment and assault is reckless and inappropriate.

We urge you not to release the final Title IX rule at this time and instead to focus on helping schools navigate the urgent issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic that is top of the mind for all students and families.

Sincerely,

  
PATTY MURRAY  
United States Senator

  
ELIZABETH WARREN  
United States Senator

  
KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND  
United States Senator