



Local



Proposed D.C. Council Bill will collect “first citywide data on street harassment”



By **Samantha Treiman** March 27, 2017, 2:13 pm

The Street Harassment Prevention Act, aiming to prevent street harassment in high risk areas, was proposed to the D.C. City Council by Council Member Brienne K. Nadeau. The bill will address harassment in different communities, particularly intersections that identify with multiple oppressed identities.

The bill will take multiple actions in its efforts, including the “first citywide data (collection) on street harassment,” said Jessica Raven, Executive Director of Collective Action for Safe Spaces.

“This bill will collect data on all forms of harassment—ranging from unwanted sexual comments to Islamophobic and transphobic harassment,” she said.

According to Stop Street Harassment’s 2014 national study, 65 percent of women and 25 percent of men, whom mostly identified as bisexual, gay, or transsexual, have “experienced some form of sexual or gender-based harassment in their lifetime,” Raven added.

“The Street Harassment Prevention Act will establish an Advisory Committee of diverse groups working on gender and racial justice, queer and trans rights, and homelessness that will work together to identify solutions for addressing harassment as it affects different communities, and especially as it affects those who live at the intersections of multiple oppressed identities,” Raven said.

The Advisory Committee, partnered with the Mayor’s Office, is going to create “a citywide awareness campaign similar to [the current campaign on public transit](#) that reminds bystanders to speak out against harassment and sends the message to people who are frequently targeted that they deserve to be treated with respect,” she said.

“The act was largely written by our very own Dave Chandrasekaran (Collective Action for Safe Spaces member) and revised by our broad and diverse coalition

members made up of immigrants’ rights groups, our local rape crisis center and local domestic violence coalition chapter, and a number of other members,” Raven wrote. “The hearing is not yet scheduled for the bill, and many of the specifics about policies and programs that will be created and funded by the bill will be determined by a group of stakeholders after it has passed,” she added.

According to the official webpage, [Collective Action for Safe Spaces](#), or CASS as Raven refers to the organization, is a community that aims to end “public sexual harassment and assault in the D.C. metropolitan area.” In her email, Raven also encouraged the retweeting of Collective Action for Safe Space’s official thank you [tweet](#) to Council Member Nadeau, informally thanking legislation for recognizing and addressing harassment in regard to race, religion, gender, and “other protected traits.” CASS is also organizing a rally on April 8th at 2 p.m. to “raise awareness about the issue and build support for this legislation.” See CASS’s Facebook event for more information.

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