



**New York City Alliance
Against Sexual Assault**

**Testimony of Emily Miles, Executive Director
New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault**

**Submitted to the New York State Budget Hearing
Hearing on Higher Education
February 27, 2023**

Founded in 2000, the mission of the New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault is to prevent sexual violence and reduce the harm it causes. Through public education, prevention programming, advocacy for survivors, and the pursuit of legal and policy changes, the Alliance works to disrupt systems and institutions that, unfortunately, can retraumatize survivors when they most need our support.

I would like to thank Chair Krueger, Chair Weinstein, as well as Chairs Stavisky and Fahy and all members of the Senate Finance, Assembly Ways and Means, and Senate and Assembly Higher Education committees for holding today's hearing on Higher Education in the FY24 Executive Budget.

In July 2015, Enough is Enough (EIE) was established to address sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking on college campuses. In addition to much needed advancements in New York State law, the legislation created an EIE funding initiative for rape crisis programs, which now supports 53 organizations across the state to work to prevent sexual violence and provide appropriate interventions when sexual violence does occur.

Though EIE programming has done much to connect survivors of gender-based violence to trauma-informed, community-based services and to promote critical prevention programming, there remain a number of gaps in service delivery and access to students across the state. Over 60 higher education campuses across New York State are not affiliated with an official EIE designated program, this accounts for over 92,000 students lacking access to critical services. At campuses that are being served, current programs report a lack of adequate staffing and program resources to reach the

level of depth necessary to meet student needs, especially for high-risk populations. High levels of staff turnover result in a loss of programmatic expertise and campus relationships, making high-level coordination between EIE programs and campus staff nearly impossible. Additionally, complex Title IX and 129-B regulations, and frequent updates to those regulations, require a high level of expertise to navigate, compounding the negative impact of staff turnover.

EIE programs also report a lack of resources to appropriately conduct outreach on campuses to target student populations. With a majority of programmatic funds going to support program staffing, few resources remain to develop and procure culturally and linguistically responsive materials and outreach tools. It is especially difficult to authentically engage diverse, representative student populations without the tools required to develop and maintain quality student volunteer and leadership opportunities. Students are frequently the best and most impactful voices in campus prevention work, yet comprehensive training and support for their work is lacking across the state.

Finally, the high levels of staff turnover in EIE programs necessitate a robust training and technical assistance program to bring new EIE staff up to speed quickly in order to minimize program disruption. EIE training and technical assistance also allows existing programs to grow and strengthen their work, becoming experts in a variety of approved prevention programs that meet a diversity of student needs. Unfortunately, individual EIE programs and the current training and technical assistance providers lack the funding required to invest in these expensive, yet effective, training programs.

Now is the time to invest in the infrastructure of Enough is Enough programming to ensure all students across New York State have access to its critical interventions. **We are asking the state to increase its annual investment in EIE programming to \$9.6 million.** Building upon the initial successes of the EIE program, this investment would allow EIE providers to:

1. Expand the reach of EIE programs

- Recruit and retain expert EIE staff and consultants to provide more comprehensive, culturally responsive programming to all higher education campuses in New York State.
- Authentically engage student populations in leading prevention and intervention efforts through paid opportunities, engaging them as trusted messengers on their campuses.

2. Invest in responsive prevention materials

- Develop EIE materials that engage students in a manner that is culturally and linguistically appropriate and represents the full diversity of New York State.

3. Enhance training and technical assistance to EIE programs

- Expand training and technical assistance to EIE programs, ensuring access to best practices in gender-based violence prevention programming and to support the student volunteer programming infrastructure.

Over 13% of undergraduate and graduate students experience sexual assault while enrolled in higher education programming. This amounts to nearly 150,000 students in New York State. When you include rates of domestic violence and stalking, those numbers only continue to climb. In the Enough is Enough program, New York State has the tools at its disposal to impact these numbers and bring about the social norms change required to substantively reduce these numbers. We just need the appropriate level of investment to equip our rape crisis programs and campuses to do that work.

On behalf of New York State's 53 EIE providers and the countless survivors they serve every year, I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.