

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 579

BY REPRESENTATIVE LAFLEUR

CRIMINAL/VICTIMS: Provides relative to the rights of survivors of sexual assault

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 46:1844(O)(1) and (W)(1)(a) and 1845(C)(2) and (D) and to
3 enact R.S. 46:1844(W)(1)(d), relative to the Sexual Assault Survivor Bill of Rights;
4 to provide relative to certain rights of a sexual assault survivor; to provide relative
5 to the preservation of sexual assault collection kits; to provide for the confidentiality
6 of certain information; to provide for exceptions; to provide for the right to be
7 notified of the rights contained within the Sexual Assault Survivor Bill of Rights;
8 and to provide for related matters.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. R.S. 46:1844(O)(1) and (W)(1)(a) and 1845(C)(2) and (D) are hereby
11 amended and reenacted and R.S. 46:1844(W)(1)(d) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

12 §1844. Basic rights for victim and witness

13 * * *

14 O. Notification of pardon or parole.

15 (1) The Board of Pardons or the committee on parole, respectively, shall
16 notify the victim or the victim's family and all persons who file a victim registration
17 and notification form and the appropriate district attorney that a hearing has been set
18 for the person convicted of the crime. The victim or victim's family shall have the

1 right to make written and oral statements as to the impact of the crime at any hearing
 2 before the board or committee and to rebut any statements or evidence introduced
 3 by the inmate or defendant. The victim or the victim's family, a victim advocacy
 4 group, and the district attorney or his representative may also appear before the board
 5 or committee in person or by means of teleconference or telephone communication.
 6 The board shall not prohibit the statement from being directed toward the inmate or
 7 defendant unless the statement disturbs the decorum of the hearing.

8 * * *

9 W. Confidentiality of crime victims who are minors, victims of sex offenses,
10 and victims of human trafficking-related offenses.

11 (1)(a) In order to protect the identity and provide for the safety and welfare
 12 of crime victims who are minors under the age of eighteen years and of victims of
 13 sex offenses or human trafficking-related offenses, notwithstanding any provision
 14 of law to the contrary, all public officials and officers and public agencies, including
 15 but not limited to all law enforcement agencies, sheriffs, district attorneys, judicial
 16 officers, clerks of court, the Crime Victims Reparations Board, and the Department
 17 of Children and Family Services or any division thereof, shall not publicly disclose
 18 the name, address, contact information, or identity of crime victims who at the time
 19 of the commission of the offense are minors under eighteen years of age or of
 20 victims of sex offenses or human trafficking-related offenses, regardless of the date
 21 of commission of the offense. The confidentiality of the identity of the victim who
 22 at the time of the commission of the offense is a minor under eighteen years of age
 23 or the victim of a sex offense or human trafficking-related offense may be waived
 24 by the victim. ~~The public disclosure of the name of the juvenile crime victim by any~~
 25 ~~public official or officer or public agency is not prohibited by this Subsection when~~
 26 ~~the crime resulted in the death of the victim.~~ Nothing in this Subsection shall be
 27 construed to require the redaction of a victim's name when the named victim is the
 28 one requesting such documents, reports, or any other records.

29 * * *

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 579 Engrossed

2026 Regular Session

LaFleur

Abstract: Expands and clarifies protections and rights of sexual assault survivors.

Present law provides a survivor of sexual assault the right to make a written and oral statement as to the impact of the crime at any hearing before the Bd. of Pardons or the committee on parole.

Proposed law retains present law and authorizes a victim to direct a statement to the inmate or defendant unless the statement disrupts the decorum of the hearing.

Present law provides that public disclosure of the name of a juvenile crime victim by a public official, officer, or agency is not prohibited when the crime results in the death of the victim.

Proposed law deletes present law.

Present law provides for the Sexual Assault Survivor Bill of Rights.

Present law provides that one of these rights is the right to have an unreported sexual assault collection kit preserved, without charge, for at least 20 years.

Proposed law amends present law to provide the right to have a sexual assault collection kit, rather than an unreported sexual assault collection kit, preserved without charge for the maximum period required by law, but not less than 20 years.

Present law prohibits public officials, agencies, and attorneys from disclosing the identity or personal information of minor victims and victims of sex or human trafficking offenses, with limited exceptions. Authorizes victims to waive confidentiality and requires attorneys to take certain steps to protect the identities of persons under 18 years of age.

Proposed law provides that present law does not apply to minor victims or victims of sex or human trafficking offenses when the crime results in their death, including criminal homicide or any offense where death is an element. Otherwise retains present law.

Present law authorizes individuals to submit complaints regarding violations of the Sexual Assault Survivor Bill of Rights to the Senate Select Committee on Women and Children for oversight.

Proposed law retains present law and additionally authorizes complaints to be submitted to the House Select Committee on Women and Children.

(Amends R.S. 46:1844(O)(1) and (W)(1)(a) and 1845(C)(2) and (D); Adds R.S. 46:1844(W)(1)(d))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Judiciary to the original bill:

1. Allow a victim to direct a victim impact statement to the inmate or defendant unless the statement disturbs the decorum of the hearing.
2. Prohibit the disclosure of the name of a victim under 18 years of age.
3. Permit the release of a minor victim's name when the crime committed against the victim includes the victim's death as an element, or when the offense is a sex offense or human trafficking related offense.
4. Authorize complaints of violations of present law (R.S. 46:1845) to be made to the House Select Committee on Women and Children.
5. Permit discretionary funds provided through the federal Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecutors (STOP) Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program to be used to update and provide information and notice required by law.
6. Require that notice be developed in consultation with sexual assault service providers and subject to approval by the La. Sexual Assault Oversight Commission.