



Florida House of Representatives

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
Rep. Roberson: (850) 488-7088

REP. ROBERSON'S SEXUAL BATTERY LEGISLATION PASSED FLORIDA HOUSE TODAY

TALLAHASSEE, FL – In an effort to empower victims of sexual battery, today, the Florida House of Representatives unanimously passed State Representative Yolly Roberson's (D-North Miami Beach) Sexual Battery legislation.

Senate Bill (SB)1312/House Bill (HB) 979 requires law enforcement officers who investigate complaints of sexual battery to provide victims making an initial report of a sexual battery offense with necessary information about access to medical treatments, forensic examinations, and crisis-intervention services. This legislation extends statutory protections currently available to victims of domestic and dating violence to victims of sexual violence.

"I believe it is critically important that law enforcement officers do everything in their power to assist victims of sexual battery," said Rep. Roberson. "This is probably the most important legislation I have ever passed in the Florida Legislature because providing relevant information to victims of sexual violence is a crucial first step toward the healing process."

According to the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence, a group whose mission is to educate, advocate, and network on behalf of individuals impacted by sexual violence, sexual battery is the most under-reported crime in America. The Bureau of Justice Statistics estimates that only 30 percent of victims report the crime to law enforcement.

In Florida, a sexual offense is reported to law enforcement every 42 minutes. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement reports that 10,823 sex offenses were reported in Florida in 2008.

Representative Roberson, an attorney who lives in Miami, was elected to the House in 2002 and subsequently reelected. She served as Democratic Whip from 2004 to 2006.

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