Sexual violence in the military is widespread. In a 2018 scientific survey conducted by the DOD, there were an estimated 20,500 cases of service members who were sexually assaulted or raped, including 13,000 women.¹

The vast majority of cases go unreported, and survivors rarely see justice. 70% of survivors did not report a crime from 2017 to 2018. When reports are made, retaliation is pervasive and can be severe.²

This is an issue for all of us. Our service members work to keep all of us safe, and are in their workplace 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days every year. Sexual assault and harassment in the military are the very definition of workplace harassment. If you’re committed to ending sexual harassment in workplace, ending it in the military is critical.

The facts are alarming.

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Abuse of power and power imbalance are stark. The majority of survivors were harassed by someone with a higher rank than them², and nearly three-quarters of service members who reported retaliation after filing a sexual assault complaint were women.³

Our national security is at risk. More than one in four survivors of sexual assault or harassment/discrimination took steps to leave the military as a result, undermining force readiness.
Real reform is long overdue.

Vanessa Guillen. Kathy Spletstoser. Asia Graham. We hear far too many stories of women and men falling victim to the failures of the DOD to protect its service members from assault and harassment within the system. No more. President Biden and his administration have signaled their commitment to addressing gender discrimination and harassment in the military. The administration, Congress, and DOD leaders must take immediate action.

Necessary changes include increasing accountability and prevention measures, reinventing the current prosecution structure, and, most importantly, centering survivors in the aftermath of harm. As non-military civilians, we need to raise our voices in the call for long-overdue action on this issue, because the fact is, when those who protect our nation from harm do not feel safe in their workplace, we are not safe either.

- Improve prevention.
- Care for and support survivors.
- Change the prosecution structure.

Join us in this fight.

As Americans, we all have a stake in making sure our armed forces are strong and resilient and represent the best of us. Our all-volunteer force constitutes 1% of our population, but is dedicated to keeping the 99% of us safe.

For too long, policy makers’ and military leaders’ unwillingness to address structural and cultural barriers have made real reform and accountability nearly impossible. For nearly a decade, the Pentagon has spent hundreds of millions of dollars in training, prevention, and other programs with little result. Without policy reform that addresses systemic issues, programmatic efforts remain ineffective.

For too long, military issues have been siloed from the mainstream, preventing the public from seeing the harsh realities service women and men face. TIME’S UP firmly stands with all service members who have endured sexual violence. We are working alongside military survivor advocates, former service members, and policy experts in this fight.

It is time we all play our part in combating and preventing harassment and assault in the military. Real change will require active pressure from all of us.

JOIN US to amplify this powerful movement toward structural and policy reform and real justice for survivors:

- Following TIME’S UP on Twitter (@TIMESUPNOW) for updates on policies that address sexual harassment and assault in the military.

²https://www.sapr.mil/sites/default/files/FY18_DOD_Annual_Report_on_Sexual_Assault_in_the_Military.pdf

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