



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **GNESA supports Dr. Christine Blasey Ford and all the survivors who bravely come forward with their story.**

We write this statement to not only express our support of Dr. Christine Blasey Ford, professor of clinical psychology at Stanford University, but also to show support for all survivors of gender-based violence. Many survivors like Dr. Ford face substantial barriers by coming forward and speaking publicly about their experience of sexual violence. Those barriers include not being believed, ongoing threats, harassment, retaliation, minimization, and denial of their experience. As a society, we need to treat victims and survivors with respect by creating spaces where they feel safe to come forward. Dr. Ford has neither done anything wrong nor should she be treated like she is on trial or have her story used for political gain.

With that said, Dr. Ford's request for confidentiality and privacy was not respected. **It is imperative that survivors be the ones to choose if, when, and how they come forward.** To that end, the Senate Judiciary Committee must honor the wishes of Dr. Ford by delaying the vote to confirm Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the United State Supreme Court until an impartial, comprehensive, and thorough investigation has been completed. While we recognize that Judge Kavanaugh has had a long and tenured career, we also recognize that many are uncomfortable with believing awful things about someone whom they respect.

Rather than placing blame, here are several actions, compiled by RALIANCE, that you, your family, your friends, and people in your community can do to help us prevent sexual violence:

- **Pledge to examine your own actions** and consider whether you have ignored things that worried you or behaved in ways that contribute to a culture of disrespect that allows for sexual harassment or misconduct.
- **Speak up and step in** when you hear sexist comments, see inappropriate photos on social media, or a situation that you are concerned may be coercive or harassing.
- **Donate to sexual violence prevention organizations** that are on the front lines fighting this widespread problem; if your local prevention organization or rape crisis center offers volunteer opportunities, sign up for a shift.
- **Teach your children or others whom you mentor about the importance of respect, caring, and looking out for each other.**

The Georgia Network to End Sexual Assault (GNESA), as the federally-recognized state sexual assault coalition, is dedicated to advocating on behalf of and supporting the work of the rape crisis centers around the state of Georgia. GNESA is committed to building statewide capacity to end sexual violence by raising awareness and creating social change.

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