



This is a reprint of a letter to the editor in the September 18, 2019, New York Times written by our partner Kimberly C. Lau

Sexual Harassment at Colleges

To the Editor:

Re “[Record Fine for Michigan St. in Nassar Case](#)” (news article, Sept. 6):
Since last November, there has been impassioned discussion regarding Education Secretary Betsy DeVos’s proposed changes to Title IX regulations, which have rightly raised concerns for colleges and universities across the country.

The investigations that led to this \$4.5 million federal fine revealed what department officials called “systemic failure to protect students from sexual abuse” by Michigan State. And as part of the resolution agreement, you report, “the university is also required to hire an independent consultant to conduct an assessment of its Title IX grievance procedures and completely overhaul them.”

At the heart of the larger Title IX debate, which was begun by Secretary DeVos’s proposed rule changes, is the issue of due process in these proceedings, which are badly in need of reform and would greatly benefit from consistency across universities. This would ensure a fairer system with clear standards that can benefit all and ensure the integrity of the results in Title IX proceedings.

This fine will act as a meaningful deterrent to schools that fail to comply with Education Department guidance, whatever those final rules are determined to be.

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The writer, a partner in the law firm Warshaw Burstein, is chair of its Title IX/College Discipline Practice.

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