

March 20, 2023

Chair Marzola
Assembly Commerce and Labor
Nevada State Assembly
Legislative Building
Carson City, NV 89701

Testimony on AB 276

Good afternoon Chair Marzola and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Serena Evans, and I am the Policy Director for the Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence. Currently, there are only six locations statewide where a victim-survivor can receive a SANE exam. For victim-survivors in rural communities, this means that they may have to travel upwards of 6-9 hours in one direction to receive this exam. Best practices encourage victim-survivors not to eat, shower, or use the restroom before a SANE exam so as not to disturb any of the evidence on their body. Can you imagine having just been intimately violated, your body being a living crime scene, and having to travel that long of a distance to receive appropriate care and have your evidence collected? Simply stated, the current procedures in Nevada for SANE exams are not victim-centered and further place the burden on the victim-survivor.

Because of the long travel times and limited locations, victim-survivors may choose to go without a SANE exam. Because many often do not have the resources to pay for healthcare services out of pocket, they go without vital care and preventative services like prophylactic medication, STI testing, strangulation exams, and education about possible health risks. Additionally, by not having their evidence collected, the victim-survivor loses the option to participate in the criminal justice system.

NCEDSV is currently working with our rural communities, primarily in the Elko area, and Preseveli, a mobile SANE provider, to stand up mobile SANE services, ensuring that victim-survivors in rural communities have access to these lifesaving, critical, wrap-around services without further burdening the victim-survivor. However, this pilot project is specific to this one rural community of Nevada and we need to ensure that these services are available statewide.

Our victim-survivors in this state deserve better, and we must work to reduce barriers and make lifesaving services more accessible.