|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **cid:image001.jpg@01D33856.BB18E470**     |  |  | | --- | --- | | **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** [Megan Taylor](mailto:Megan_Taylor@heller.senate.gov) | | September 28, 2017 | 202-224-6244 | |

**Heller-Backed Bill to Fight Nationwide Rape Kit Backlog Passes Committee**

**Washington, D.C.** – Today, the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee passed the [Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Reporting (SAFER) Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=AC843F36-1234-4CB6-BC03-173239BDD647), a bill introduced by U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) along with Senators John Cornyn (R-TX), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), and Michael Bennet (D-CO). This legislation reauthorizes, strengthens, and extends the SAFER program in an effort to reduce the nationwide rape kit backlog.

In addition to reauthorizing this program, the legislation would ensure pediatric forensic nurses are eligible for training, highlighting the need for pediatric sexual assault nurse examiners in responding to children suffering from abuse.

“Victims of sexual assault deserve swift justice and nothing less,” **said Heller.** “Today the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee took action to help Nevada law enforcement in their efforts to cut down on the backlog of untested rape kits and ensure critical evidence isn’t left collecting dust. I’m proud to partner with Senator Cornyn on this legislation and see it gain momentum in Congress. As a strong supporter and author of proposals to crack down on these horrific crimes and aid victims on a path to recovery and closure, I urge the full U.S. Senate to swiftly pass this bill so it is one step closer to becoming law.”

###