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**Heller, Bipartisan Group of Senators, Introduce Bill to Help Reduce National Rape Kit Backlog**

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV), along with Sens. John Cornyn (R-TX), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), and Michael Bennet (D-CO), today introduced the Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Reporting (SAFER) Act, bipartisan legislation to reauthorize, strengthen, and extend the Sexual Assault Forensic Registry program in an effort to help reduce the national 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,” **Heller said.** “This bill helps 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 have a long history of supporting and authoring proposals to crack down on these horrific crimes and aid victims on a path to recovery and closure. I’m proud to join Senator Cornyn in introducing this important bipartisan legislation that empowers law enforcement to fight sexual assault crimes.”

“The backlog of untested kits sitting in labs and evidence lockers across the country is unacceptable and only adds to the pain of survivors. This bill ensures our state and local law enforcement agencies continue to have the resources to solve crimes, and provide survivors with the justice they deserve,” **Sen. Cornyn said**. “I look forward to reauthorizing and strengthening this bipartisan legislation that has already done so much for survivors.”

“It’s a tragedy that unprocessed rape kits are sitting in storage when they could hold the answers to unsolved crimes,” **Klobuchar said.** “Reauthorizing this bipartisan legislation will strengthen law enforcement’s efforts to reduce the number of untested rape kits and help put perpetrators behind bars.”

“Survivors of sexual violence deserve thorough and fair investigations,” **Bennet said**. “Right now, critical DNA evidence sits untested because law enforcement agencies lack the necessary tools and training to process it. The SAFER Act makes commonsense reforms to address our nation’s rape-kit backlog and ensure that justice is served.”

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