

In one week, the people of Alabama will choose whether to elect to the United States Senate a man who at least 8 women say sexual assaulted them or made unwanted sexual advances toward them as adolescents. Since #metoo went viral, women across the country have spoken out against other powerful men—including politicians of all stripes—who used their positions to harass and abuse them. Sadly, some people in power, along with everyday Americans, have publicly downplayed or dismissed these and other women who have spoken out.

Sexual violence transcends politics, and TAASA is dismayed by those in power who would disregard sexual assault accusations against candidates for elected office. We stand firmly in support of the women and men who have named their abusers, as well as those quietly enduring the cynical, public defenses of abusers in recent days.

Every time sexual assault is minimized or spun for political gain, it devalues the experiences of survivors and sends a dangerous message: speaking out will not have ramifications for the perpetrator.

We must continue to hold accountable those who commit sexual harassment and assault, regardless of their party affiliation or standing in the community.

This is a critical moment. We are encouraged that so many survivors now feel empowered to speak publicly. As a society, we have an unprecedented opportunity to improve understanding and change behaviors. We must do better for survivors.

