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CONTACT

Alejandro Florez
Office of Representative Johanna López
Alejandro.Florez@myfloridahouse.gov
850-717-5043

Representative López Files Pro-Educated Families Bill

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. - On Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2023, **Representative Johanna López (D-Orlando)** filed [House Bill 191](#). This bill would provide pregnant survivors of rape with an exemption from college tuition and fees and establish a grant program that pays for childcare while the survivors attend school.

Representative Johanna López (D-Orlando) issued the following statement: “This Bill would give some relief and hope to the young people who are raped and find themselves pregnant as a result. The decision to keep a baby after a traumatic event can affect a person’s mental health and finances. These circumstances force people to prioritize their children over school potentially funneling pregnant survivors into a life of low-paying jobs and government welfare. With HB 191 these survivors would have the opportunity to continue with their higher education, be parents, and have access to better-paying jobs and without complete dependence on the state.”

Representatives Katherine Waldron (D-Wellington), Kristen Arrington (D-Kissimmee), Jervonte “Tae” Edmonds (D-Palm Beach), and Ashley Viola Gantt (D-Miami), Susan Valdés (D-Tampa), Marie Woodson (D-Hollywood) are proud to co-sponsor this legislation and will work alongside Representative Johanna López (D-Orlando) to create a better future for Floridian survivors of rape and their families.

Representative Katherine Waldron (D-Wellington) issued the following statement: “This bill provides critical and necessary assistance to women who are in a situation not of their choosing and have been subjected to the predatory behavior of bad actors. Historically, it has been proven that education is the key to a person’s ability to live independently and HB191 helps accomplish just that.”

Representative Ashley Viola Gantt (D-Miami) issued the following statement: “It takes tremendous courage for a young woman to recapture the power of choice over her body when she has suffered a grave violation. To keep a child created from such violation is even more evidence of her unshakable courage. It is an honor to co-sponsor legislation that supports young women who continue seeking a quality education in the face of tragedy. They, too, should still have every opportunity to create the life they desire and providing child care support while they are in school is a mechanism we can use to aide them in that purpose. Florida families, even when they are created in grievous circumstances, still deserve the chance to be healthy,

prosperous and safe.”

Representative Kristen Arrington (D-Kissimmee) issued the following statement: “I applaud Rep. Lopez for sponsoring this bill to help victims of rape get the opportunity to receive an education that can provide them career opportunities to succeed.”

Representative Jervonte “Tae” Edmonds (D-Palm Beach) issued the following statement: “The Florida House of Representatives must pass this bill in order to ensure that all women, regardless of income or circumstance, have access to the education they need to succeed in life.”

Representative Susan Valdés (D-Tampa) issued the following statement: “I’m proud to co-sponsor Representative López’s bill. The women who fall pregnant from these violent crimes committed against them need our support. These women will be given tools that will help them provide for their new family thanks to this bill. Their future and educational endeavors matter.”

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