



## **Assembly Bill 2843**

### **Eliminating Costs for Victims of Sexual Assault**

---

#### **SUMMARY**

AB 2843 would remove cost as a barrier for rape survivors seeking medical care following their assault.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Rape and sexual assault statistics are staggering: Just one-fifth of survivors seek medical care following their assault, and only slightly more report their assault to the police. People of color and members of the LGBTQ+ community are far less likely to report their assault. Survivors choose not to report their assault or seek care for a variety of reasons, including shame, distrust of law enforcement, and fear of retribution.

One frequently overlooked challenge that survivors experience is cost. Rape kits are covered by the federal Violence Against Women's Act, and private insurance usually covers drug testing and lab services. However, further care is not covered and subject to co-pays and deductibles for those with insurance. The average emergency room medical bill for rape survivors is approximately **\$3,600**. Other research suggests that even victims with private insurance pay around **\$500**.

#### **NEED FOR THE BILL**

Due to hospital and insurance costs, many rape survivors are discouraged and deterred from seeking medical care. An additional consequence is that victims are thus less able to give forensic evidence in a Sexual Assault Forensic Exam, commonly known as a rape kit.

This adds additional barriers to the already significant challenge of bringing the perpetrator to justice.

#### **SOLUTION**

AB 2843 prohibits insurers from charging rape survivors for medical services and care related to their assault.

The trauma that survivors of sexual violence endure is painful and distressing enough. They should not then be sent a bill for care they receive.

#### **SUPPORT**

American Association of University Women  
California (Sponsor)

#### **CONTACT**

Victoria Harris, Senior Legislative Assistant  
[Victoria.Harris@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Victoria.Harris@asm.ca.gov), (916) 319-2073