

## A JOINT STATEMENT ON PRESIDENT JOHN ENGLER AND SELECT MEMBERS OF THE MSU BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

We, the Sister Survivors of Larry Nassar's horrific sexual abuse, stand together against the recent character attacks made towards us and derogatory statements aimed at all survivors of sexual abuse by Michigan State University President John Engler. While our hope had been that President Engler would bring accountability, transparency, and change to MSU, it is clear to us that he cannot.

We recognize that the greatest measure of an abusive culture is how survivors are viewed, and whether perpetrators and enablers will be held accountable and the environment in which they thrive remediated. On all these metrics, President Engler has only reinforced the culture of abuse at MSU. Our deepest concern is the impact his statements and behavior will have on survivors who are still living in silence, and in creating an unsafe environment on campus by communicating a demeaning and derogatory attitude towards survivors of abuse who still seek the confidence to speak up. This is not leadership. President Engler's statements and behavior are subtle threats against anyone who dares to speak up against their abuser and the environment that enabled their predatory conduct, lest they be ridiculed, lied about, and shamelessly mocked by a person of immense power.

President Engler's abhorrent behavior – including gaveling down a survivor who only wanted him to listen and belligerently abrasive statements unmasking a survivor who only sought the comforts of confidentiality – has sent a chilling message across MSU's campus, causing damage that cannot be repaired until he is gone.

The most recent public disclosure of emails only further reveals the damaging mindset he has towards sexual abuse survivors who come forward. President Engler clearly views sexual abuse survivors as either manipulators out to use people for personal gain (having the same mindset as our abuser), or as themselves manipulated into being used by someone for personal gain (victims yet again).

To President Engler, board members who support him, and other leaders at MSU who agree with his position, we say “no”. We have not become like our abuser – manipulating for self-gain. We chose to speak up at great personal cost because it was right. Because we care about those still silenced. Because we stand to protect those who are still at risk. Future and current survivors who have not yet spoken up need to know that they will not be attacked and assigned the same motivations as their abuser when they demand justice.

And we are not being revictimized, manipulated for the benefit of someone else. We chose this fight. We chose to speak up because it was clear that no one at MSU would. We chose to speak up because it was the right thing to do. Future and current survivors who deserve justice should know they can raise their voice without being characterized as pawns too foolish to know they are manipulated.

We have made our motivations clear at every turn: we never want there to be another survivor of sexual abuse on MSU's campus who fears to speak up against their abuser and whose cries go unheard by its administration. The environment which will allow this dream to become a reality requires leadership whose statements and behavior engenders trust and models exemplary conduct – not leaders who destroy trust and set a bad example. In his emails, President Engler suggested a debate on who is doing more for survivors. We are here to tell you that all the organizational changes and policy and procedure enhancements in the world mean nothing if there is not leadership that creates an environment where survivors feel safe to speak up.

On the point, there is no debate: President Engler has failed miserably. President Engler and leaders at MSU have refused to listen. They persist in attacking our character, our integrity and our intelligence. These attacks send a clear message that survivors who speak up will likewise be attacked. They send a clear message that perpetrators and enablers will not be held accountable. They send a clear message that nothing at MSU – none of the mindsets that allowed Larry Nassar to abuse children for decades – have changed. Therefore, it is our position that MSU cannot move forward and become an institution of integrity and safety until John Engler is no longer President, and a new interim leader who will stand against an abusive culture is found.

Each member of the MSU board of trustees who chose President Engler and have refused to stand against his attacks and characterizations of sexual assault survivors is complicit in his abusive mindset and in continuing the culture of abuse at MSU.

We call on Trustees Melanie Foster, Brian Breslin, Mitch Lyons, Joel Ferguson, Dan Kelly and George Perles to stand against this mindset and these attacks. We call on them to stand for what is right by demanding President Engler's immediate resignation, and removing him if he refuses to resign. The lack of courage these trustees have displayed to this point is discouraging, and their silence is deafening.

To Trustee Melanie Foster: Your choice as a woman to stand by in silence while hundreds of female sexual abuse victims are attacked and vilified – some of us as young as 15 years old – is appalling. You are aligning yourself with misogyny, and against not only women, but even children. Until you find the courage to speak up like so many of us survivors before you, it is clear you value political loyalty and cronyism over personal integrity.

To Trustee Brian Breslin: Your silence and complicity – protecting John Engler over sexual assault survivors, over what is best for MSU, and over the current students and children who attend and visit your campus – is horrifying. Your refusal to stand against these attacks is an alliance with them, putting cronyism and self-protection ahead of what is right, and ahead of human beings.

To Trustee Mitch Lyons: Your willingness to fight hard on the football field has been duly noted. We are deeply disturbed at your unwillingness to fight over something that matters so much more: the safety of women and children. Your refusal to stand against these attacks and the culture of abuse puts every survivor and potential victim on MSU's campus at risk. We are asking you to bring the tenacity and determination you brought to

a sport to something much bigger: Leading a university. You have six months left in your term. Please don't lose your willingness to fight hard for what is right at the end of the fourth quarter.

To Trustee Joel Ferguson – Your alliance with John Engler and his positions are unsurprising, given how you have spoken of the survivors in the past, and the way you clearly believe fundraising and sports centers outrank little girls. But it is never too late to do the right thing, and we are asking you to do it now.

To Trustee Dan Kelly: Your position on sexual abusers, pedophiles, and assault survivors as a defense attorney makes your lack of moral integrity clear. Your position remains clear in your alliance with a leader who characterizes survivors of sexual abuse as manipulators and pawns. Until you stand against these abusive mindsets in a position of leadership, your inability to lead at MSU is obvious.

To Trustee George Perles: We know you are undergoing serious health issues – please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you. However, we also must recognize that you still have authority and a responsibility in this situation. We are asking you to do the right thing, to stand against an abusive culture and do what is necessary to restore integrity and safety to MSU's campus.

President Engler has refused to apologize for his attacks and lies, and instead issued a public statement which referred to these attacks and lies as “tensions” which existed in the “past.” Yes, we may have settled the lawsuits. However, our determination to make sure that no child, student, or anyone else is ever abused on MSU's campus or by one of its employees again will not cease until MSU has a leadership who creates an environment where no child, student or person fears to speak up and their tears are wiped away while a comforting ear listens to their cries.

President Engler was correct when he said that “actions matter, and that is how the success of our work will be determined.” President Engler's actions are clear. Now the Board must be clear. Our actions as survivors have been clear. We stood against our abuser. We stood against an abusive culture. Now we are asking you to stand against it too and lead MSU forward into real change.

Sincerely,

The Sister Survivors

Abigayle Bergeron  
Alaina Bamfield  
Alex Neil-Sevier  
Alexandra Bourque  
Alexandra Romano  
Alexis Alvarado

Grace Schneider  
Gwen Anderson  
Hannah Morrow  
Jade Capua  
Jaime Doski  
Jane 115 Doe

Lisa M. Johnson  
Louise Harder  
Lyndsy Gamet  
Madeleine Jones  
Margaret Renee Twitty  
Marion Siebert

Alexis Moore  
Alison Chauvette  
Aly Raisman  
Alyssa Avery  
Amanda Barterian  
Amanda Cormier  
Amanda Green  
Amanda Smith  
Amanda Thomashow  
Amy Labadie  
Anna Ludes  
Annette Hill  
Arianna Castillo  
Ashley Yost  
Becca Boeving  
Bethany Bauman  
Bree Randall-Gay  
Brittany West  
Carrie Hogan  
Catryina Brown  
Chandler Lynn  
Charla Burill  
Chelsea DeLamielleure  
Chelsea Zerfas  
Chrissy Ball  
Christina Barba  
Christina Holmes  
Courtney Faynor  
Danielle Moore  
Elizabeth Heilman  
Emily Goetz  
Emily Meinke  
Emma Ann Miller  
Erin McCann  
Eve Petrie  
Grace French

Jane A12 Doe  
Jane A2 Doe  
Jane A38 Doe  
Jane B10 Doe  
Jane B12 Doe  
Jane B49 Doe  
Jane B56 Doe  
Jane B59 Doe  
Jane B60 Doe  
Jane B7 Doe  
Jane B77 Doe  
Jane B92 Doe  
Jane Doe 92  
Jane Doe B8  
Jenelle Moul  
Jennica Lurie  
Jennifer Bedford  
Jennifer Hayes  
Jessica Schedler De Rodriguez  
Jessica Smith  
Jessica Tarrant  
Kaitlyn Basel  
Kara Abigail  
Kara Johnson  
Kate Mahon  
Katie Lovellette  
Kayla Galecka  
Kayla Spicher  
Kaylee Lorincz  
Kelly Johnson  
Kourtney Weidner  
Larissa Boyce  
Laura Scudder  
Leslie R. Miller  
Lindsey Schuett  
Lisa Hovey

Marta Stern  
Meaghan Ashcraft  
Megan Ginter  
Megan Halicek  
Melissa Hudecz  
Melissa Vigogne  
Michael & Zsuzsanna Mahon  
Morgan Margraves  
Morgan McCaul  
Morgan Valley  
Natalie Venuto Hawkins  
Nicole Reeb  
Nicole Soos  
Olivia Venuto  
Parents of Jane A38 Doe  
Rachael Denhollander  
Rebecca Mark  
Reed Anderson  
Samantha Ursch  
Sara Teristi  
Sarah Klein  
Savannah Coomer  
Selena Brennan  
Stephanie Robinson  
Sterling Reithman  
Steve and Judy Brady  
Survivor 11  
Tamera Bourque  
Taundra Mitchell-Faynor  
Taylor Stevens  
Tiffany Dutton  
Tiffany M. Lopez  
Trinea Gonczar  
Valerie Webb  
Victim 13  
Whitney Burns