

Responses to Written Questions Submitted by Honorable Jerry Moran to Honorable John Engler

Question. Last month it was reported that the MSU attorney who defended the institution against sexual abuse lawsuits has now been placed in charge of the University's Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance. Given the nature of this newly created office and its important role in developing education and outreach programs as it relates to sexual assault, do you think it is proper to appoint someone who has defended the University from claims of sexual assault to run this office? Do you think actions such as this undermine the public's confidence on whether the focus of the MSU Title IX office is on protecting students and athletes versus liability issues?

Response. In June, the head of MSU's Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance accepted a new job outside of Michigan. Rob Kent, a member of MSU's Office of General Counsel, was appointed to serve in that role in an interim capacity, and a national search for a permanent associate vice president is underway. We do not believe that Kent's interim service in this role will undermine public confidence in the office. He was instrumental in establishing the University Policy on Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct and has worked closely with the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights during their reviews of MSU's handling of sexual assault cases. Moreover, as I testified, we have taken many actions to strengthen the Title IX office, including providing increased resources to allow it to grow from 15 to 30 employees, creating a new Title IX Prevention, Outreach, and Education Office, and hiring a leading third party investigative services firm to assist with investigations and reduce response times for Title IX complaints. All of these demonstrate the importance we place in the Title IX office and its work.