



## Senate panel approves bill to give survivors of USC's Dr. Tyndall a chance at justice in state civil court

AB 1510 will allow victims facing statute of limitations challenges a short opportunity to hold the doctor and university accountable

**SACRAMENTO (June 18, 2019)** – USC students who fell victim to Dr. George Tyndall, the campus gynecologist accused of molesting thousands of women in his care over nearly three decades, will have an chance to seek justice in a state civil court under a bill passed today by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

AB 1510 by Asm. Eloise Gómez Reyes (D-San Bernardino) and backed by Consumer Attorneys of California would allow former students to press ahead with legal claims that face being denied because the statute of limitations on their cases may have run out.

In May of 2018, the story broke of a cover-up by USC of sexual misconduct by Tyndall, the sole full-time gynecologist at its Student Health Center since 1989. Although USC received numerous complaints over the decades about Tyndall, it failed to take action against the doctors and only belatedly conducted an investigation in 2016 after a nurse reported the doctor to a rape crisis center.

Among the accusations are that Tyndall forced patients to strip naked and took photographs, groped breasts, and digitally penetrated them – often without wearing gloves and with unwashed hands – and made racist, misogynistic and sexually-harassing comments to the young students.

“Perpetrators of sexual abuse do not succeed in silos – they are enabled by their community when those around them choose not to act,” said Mai Mizuno, a 2019 USC graduate who was molested by Tyndall her freshman year. “This man destroyed generations of women, and he was able to do so because USC enabled his abuse by ignoring reports of his criminal behavior, and by actively covering it up.”

More than 700 former students have filed civil lawsuits in California civil court against Tyndall and USC for sexual battery and related sexual abuse, but the university will likely seek dismissal of the claims on grounds they are time-barred. AB 1510 is vital to giving Tyndall survivors their day in a California court.

The legislation does nothing to effect a separate \$215-million federal class-action settlement that USC negotiated. Instead, AB 1510 gives each Tyndall survivor a choice – they can pursue an individual lawsuit in state civil court, or they can join in the class-action settlement.

“It gives us a choice,” said Nicole Haynes, a USC student in the mid-1990s when she was molested by Tyndall while seeking help for stomach poisoning. “We can choose our own path to justice.”

The bill has won the support of USC student government and other student groups, the California Women’s Law Center, Courage Campaign, Equal Rights Advocates and the Student Senate for California Community Colleges. It now goes to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

### **For more information:**

**Eric Bailey, CAOC Communications Director, 916-669-7122, ebailey@caoc.org**