

## Biden to Discuss New Guidelines About Campus Sex Crimes

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# *Biden to Discuss New Guidelines About Campus Sex Crimes*

By SAM DILLON

Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. is urging the nation's schools and colleges to do more to prevent sexual violence, saying campus sex crimes often go unreported because victims fear that universities will not discipline offenders.

Mr. Biden travels to the University of New Hampshire on Monday to discuss new Education Department instructions, issued on Monday, to public school districts, colleges and universities about their responsibilities under civil rights laws to prevent sexual violence.

"Sexual violence can happen to anyone, and it happens at the best colleges," Mr. Biden said in a statement. "Very few report the crime to law enforcement because when they do, universities often fail to discipline the offend-

## *A broader effort to draw attention to sexual violence.*

er, leaving him free to do it again."

Mr. Biden's New Hampshire visit is part of a broader effort by the Obama administration to draw attention to sexual violence and ways to prevent it, officials said.

"There is a terrible and alarming trend in the country of sexual violence," said Russlyn H. Ali, assistant secretary of education who heads the Office of Civil Rights.

She cited a private, Internet-based survey of undergraduate women in 2007 at two public uni-

versities in which 19 percent of respondents reported that they had been victims of attempted or actual sexual assault while at college. The Justice Department financed the surveys.

On Thursday, Ms. Ali's office announced that in mid-March it received a 26-page complaint against Yale, filed by 16 students and alumni, and would investigate. The complaint says that a sexually hostile environment exists on the Yale campus and that the university has not responded effectively.

The Yale Daily News on Friday cited a 2008 incident in which fraternity pledges were photographed holding a sign referring to Yale women in sexually degrading language. That and other episodes were indications of a worsening sexual climate at Yale, several of those who signed the

complaint to the department's Office of Civil Rights told the student newspaper.

A spokesman said Yale takes all allegations of sexual misconduct "extremely seriously" and would cooperate with any investigation.

The Education Department's new guidance came in the form of a 19-page letter to all educational institutions that receive federal money.

It says that once a school or university "knows or reasonably should know of possible sexual violence," it must act to end the violence, protect those who have reported it and investigate to find out what happened.

Mr. Biden picked the university in Durham, N.H., to make his remarks, officials said, because it has exemplary sexual violence prevention programs.