

Porcellian Club
1324 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

April 27, 2016

Rakesh Khurana
Dean of Harvard College
University Hall, Room 119
Harvard College
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Dean Khurana:

We have affirmed in our previous letters to you that we stand ready to work with Harvard to reduce sexual assault. We agree with the central message of the March 7, 2016 Final Report of the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Assault (the “Final Report”), namely that sexual assault at Harvard is a very serious problem requiring immediate attention and effective action.

As you now know, the Porcellian Club is a strictly private organization with a policy of no guests on our premises other than family members on special occasions and we are unaware of there ever having been a reported allegation of sexual assault at our club. However, we do believe that our club, along with all final clubs and all student organizations, has an important part to play in reducing sexual assault. As you know from our previous communications with you, we have committed our institution to that challenge.

Although we share the above goals with Harvard, we strongly object to repeated public statements by Harvard officials incorrectly implying that the 2015 AAU survey established statistically a direct connection between sexual assault and final clubs.

Harvard’s persistent use of misleading talking points has distracted the public and the student body from the undisputed fact established by the Final Report that the vast majority of sexual assaults occur on Harvard property under Harvard control.

We have previously expressed concern about the statistical analyses and offered to demonstrate their flaws. Having received no response on this point, we commissioned Welch Consulting, a recognized authority on economics and statistics, to perform an analysis of the data referred to in the Final Report.

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Jora B. Stixrud, Ph.D., is the author of this analysis, which is included for your review with this letter. She has determined that: a.) “the 47% figure does not provide any meaningful information about whether there is any relationship between Final Clubs and nonconsensual sexual contact”; and b.) “the 15% figure also provides no statistical information as to what percent of those reporting nonconsensual sexual contact may have experienced an incident at a Final Club.”

Dr. Stixrud concludes that “this survey does not contain any data that would allow an analyst to actually support the recommendations of the Task Force that pertain to Final Clubs.”

In the interest of transparency, and because the misuse of the survey results has been a matter of significant concern to the leadership of the other final clubs as well, we are sharing this information with the graduate leaders of all women’s, men’s and coed final clubs.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ David T. Lawrence

David T. Lawrence ‘67
Graduate President