

**From:** [Arellano, Joey](#)  
**To:** [FLHouseDems](#)  
**Subject:** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Sen. Berman & Rep. Bartleman File Bill to Protect Survivors' Privacy  
**Date:** Thursday, February 16, 2023 1:37:53 PM

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 16, 2023

**CONTACT:**

Abby Ross  
Office of Senator Lori Berman  
[Ross.Abbey@flsenate.gov](mailto:Ross.Abbey@flsenate.gov)  
850.487.5026

Thomas Wilmouth  
Office of Representative Robin Bartleman  
[Thomas.Wilmouth@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Thomas.Wilmouth@myfloridahouse.gov)  
850. 717.5103

**Senator Lori Berman and Representative Robin Bartleman  
File Bill to Protect Survivors' Privacy**

**Tallahassee, FL** – Today **Senator Lori Berman (D-Boca Raton)** and **Representative Robin Bartleman (D-Weston)**, with **Representative Juan Alfonso Fernandez-Barquin (R-Miami)**, filed [SB 852/ HB 873](#), which provides that a survivor of sexual violence or sexual exploitation has the right to prevent any person or entity from disclosing or disseminating information or records that are statutorily exempt from public disclosure and which might identify the survivor as a victim. The legislation authorizes the survivor of a sexual assault to initiate a civil action for an injunction against persons who violate their privacy.

“This legislation can be life-saving during unimaginable times, and I ask personally, on behalf of all victims and survivors, that you pass this bill without delay,” said sexual assault survivor Karen Hansen. “Anyone who has been sexually violated should have the right to own their story, without being involuntarily thrust into the public eye or targeted by individuals or systems who focus on shame and intimidation tactics to impose silence. It is only until the right amount of personal strength can be found, that a victim or survivor may choose to publicly share their story or name, at their own discretion.”

“Many victims, like Karen, are reluctant to come forward because of their legitimate concern that their identity will become public knowledge,” said **Senator Berman**. “This bill helps prevent breaches in their security so that justice can prevail for these victims. Survivors deserve our support and encouragement and that begins by assuring them of their privacy.”

**Representative Bartleman** stated, “This bill is necessary to protect the privacy of

sexual assault victims. These survivors should not have to fear opening up social media and finding their stories on display. They should not be traumatized by public exposure.”

“Victims of sexual violence or exploitation have already endured enough, and should not live in fear of retaliation or backlash. Each of these survivors deserves their privacy and anonymity, and this bill will ensure they find peace of mind as they seek justice under the law,” said **Representative Fernandez-Barquin**.

The Florida Council Against Sexual Violence, Palm Beach County Victims’ Services and the Sexual Assault Response Team are also all in support of this legislation. “As professionals who work exclusively with victims of sexual violence, the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence sees first-hand the toll that releases of information, whether intentional or negligent, have on victims’ mental and physical states and, consequently, their willingness to access supportive and trauma-informed services,” said Jennifer L. Dritt, Executive Director of the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence. “A victim’s right to privacy is the cornerstone upon which all other rights and services depend. FCASV’s Sexual Violence Legal Services team works to protect survivors’ privacy and safety, helping to prevent and alleviate re-traumatization, and guarding a victim’s right to control what information they release and to whom.”

The bill has been filed for the 2023 legislative session, which begins Tuesday, March 7, 2023.

*\*Please call Florida’s Statewide Abuse Hotline at 1-888-956-7273 if you or a loved one ever needs to reach out for help.\**

# # #