



THE GENERAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, 02133-1053

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 5, 2017

CONTACT

Kelsey Brennan, Office of Senator Rodrigues, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Ethics
617-722-1114

Senate Committee on Ethics Chairman Rodrigues Statement

BOSTON- At the opening of the first Senate Committee on Ethics Meeting today, Senator Rodrigues issued the following statement:

I am deeply disturbed by these allegations which jeopardize the integrity of the Senate. Sexual harassment and assault have no place in the Massachusetts State Senate, or any workplace. I am committed to a fair and thorough review of the facts as well as a process that ensures confidentiality for any person who has any information to report on sexual harassment or sexual assaults.

I supported the decision to appoint an independent investigator so that we can establish a non-partisan, thorough and independent process. Any candidate for the role of the independent investigator will be carefully screened and scrutinized by Ethics Committee members to ensure a comprehensive and impartial investigation.

The integrity of the Senate as a public institution is far more important than any individual member. The vote last night by Democrat and Republican members of the Senate is the first step towards getting the facts.

Let me repeat what I said above. As part of this process, I and other members of the Ethics Committee are committed to protecting the names of any individuals who come forward and assuring them confidentiality during this process.

Any and all witnesses to the alleged misconduct must be assured they can cooperate comfortably and confidentially without fear of repercussion or retaliation by anyone, now or in the future. As the Chair of the Senate Committee on Ethics, I am mindful that this Committee must do its work and earn the public's trust. The first step for the Committee will be the hiring of the investigator and outlining the scope of authority given that investigator.

Our role as Committee members is not to conduct the investigation, but rather set in place the mechanisms for discovering the truth and allowing the investigator to proceed without delay or any impediments by this Committee.

Given the seriousness of these charges and the quasi-judicial responsibilities of this Committee in this matter, I will, with the full support of the entire Ethics Committee, update the public on relevant and important actions, but not issue daily comments once the investigator is retained.

Let me also be very clear that it is the independent investigator who will be charged with doing this job and that the Ethics Committee's role is to set in motion the apparatus and funding necessary for that job to be done impartially and without regard to the consequences. Once the investigation is completed, it will be the responsibility of the Committee to take appropriate action.

###