

## Fact Sheet

# House Bill 723: Prohibit nondisclosure agreements regarding child sexual abuse



Led by: Rep. Klopfenstein, Rep. Melanie Miller

## Legislative Proposal

Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) are legal contracts that prevent individuals from sharing specified information and are commonly used in business contexts to protect sensitive data. However, in cases of sexual violence, NDAs are often used in settlement agreements to silence survivors, preventing them from speaking about their experiences, the perpetrator, or the institution involved. This enforced silence can suppress evidence, conceal patterns of abuse, and limit public awareness of ongoing risks from perpetrators and institutions.

This bill prohibits NDAs when they are related to child sexual abuse. It also makes any agreement (settlements, employment agreements) that limits someone's ability to notify law enforcement void and unenforceable in Ohio.

## Talking Points

### The Right to Speak Without Fear

Many survivors of child sexual abuse were already told "don't tell" by their abuser. NDAs can reinforce that same dynamic.

### NDAs Perpetuate Abuse

Several high-profile cases feature the use of NDAs to cover up abuse. For example, former film producer Harvey Weinstein used NDAs for decades to silence victims. Similarly, former U.S. women's gymnastic doctor Larry Nassar allegedly used NDAs in settlements with survivors to prevent them from speaking out about the abuse and the institutional failures that enabled it. Clearly, the use of NDAs by individuals and organizations creates legal barriers to disclosure, hinders accountability, and allows abuse to continue.

### OAESV's Position

Survivors deserve the freedom to share their experiences without being silenced by NDAs that can prolong trauma and shield those who caused harm.

Central to OAESV's work is uplifting survivor voices, including our storytelling projects and Survivor Council. We know that the ability to speak openly is essential to healing, accountability, and preventing future abuse.

*OAESV's public policy work is supported by a generous grant from the George Gund Foundation, a private Ohio non-profit organization that has donated \$722 million dollars since 1952 to projects that advance human welfare and society.*