



## Vertigo Charitable Foundation, LLC

### PRESS STATEMENT BY VERTIGO CHARITABLE FOUNDATION, LLC

As a foundation that advocates for the legal rights of adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse who seek to hold their perpetrators accountable under the law, we join the urgent call for the formation of a National Commission to address the epidemic of child sex abuse in this country.

In recent years, the federal government has focused on the important issues of sexual assaults in the military and on college campuses. But what about the childhood victims of sexual assaults? According to a study by the U.S. Department of Health and Human services, some 63,000 cases of child sexual abuse were reported in 2012. It is estimated that there are more than 40 million adult survivors in the United States. The actual numbers are even more staggering because child sex abuse is a vastly underreported crime. The government's silence in the face of numerous studies and documented cases exposing the scope of this problem is deafening.

To paraphrase Vice-President Biden's statement made in the context of campus sexual assaults, the federal government "can no longer turn a blind eye or pretend" rapes and sexual assaults of children do not occur. The time has come – no, is long past due – for the government to take action to prevent child sexual abuse from occurring, to support adult survivors, and to reform a legal system that presently favors abusers and the institutions that protect them, over the abused. A National Commission must be formed to study and formulate ways to protect children from sexual crimes, to raise public awareness as to the horrific scope of the problem, and to propose legislation mandating legal reforms that will restore balance to the scales of justice by providing survivors with a fair chance to obtain legal redress against their abusers.

We note that the last White House Conference on Children was held more than 40 years ago. The creation of a National Commission on child sexual abuse is an essential first step in making the protection of children from sexual abuse a national priority. A child's right to be safe from physical and psychological harm perpetrated by adults is a basic human right. And the preservation of that right is the most fundamental responsibility of a moral government and its people.

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