

# MALESURVIVOR

Hope. Healing. Support.

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## A call for the formation of a National Commission to stem the epidemic of child sex abuse in the United States

In cooperation with dozens of other child abuse prevention and response organizations, MaleSurvivor joins the call for the formation of a National Commission to investigate and address child sexual abuse in the United States. Although significant improvements have been made in public awareness that child sexual abuse occurs at alarming rates, far too many children remain at risk and too many survivors struggle to find healing resources and have their stories heard.

Sexual abuse is one of the most devastating injuries a person can endure. Millions of child sexual abuse survivors face significantly greater risk for many negative health outcomes and shorter life expectancies. However unlike our response to crime victims and in times of natural disaster, survivors of sexual abuse routinely experience reactions of shame, silence, and stigma that is often as traumatizing and re-victimizing as the abuse itself. Worse, unequal protections for survivors in the law across the country make it impossible for many survivors to hold to account their perpetrators and the institutions that enabled and empowered them.

We agree with our partners that the time has come for the federal government to move from silence, which is the breeding ground for abuse, to action. The epidemic levels of child sexual abuse in our country warrant a historic response from the highest levels of our government. More than 20 years of failure have shown us that prevention of abuse and healing for survivors cannot be accomplished when institutions and their lawyers are allowed to conduct internal investigations. We therefore urge the President to create a national initiative where survivors will have their voices heard and that will shine a spotlight into the dark corners of our country and expose perpetrators and those that harbor and enable them.

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