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Boston University Commitment to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

As the first coeducational medical college in the world and the first American university to award a PhD to a woman, Boston University has long been committed to providing a welcoming and respectful setting for students, faculty, and staff of all genders. It is a commitment etched into our narrative and an essential part of BU's continuing effort to attract the very best faculty and students to our campuses.

In February 2019, BU created a working group charged with developing a set of recommendations for how the University can advance its efforts to provide a working and learning environment that is free of gender-based harassment. The group is identifying best practices in preventing gender-based harassment, researching BU's existing efforts, and collectively working on recommended action steps that will cultivate a culture and climate across all disciplines at BU that rejects gender-based harassment.

The National Academies report on *Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine* provides a disturbing account of the scope of gender-based harassment in academia. According to the report, academic environments have the second-highest rate of sexual harassment (58%) when compared to the military (69%), the private sector, and the government.

By eroding the professional and educational success of those on campus, harassment threatens the very mission of research universities. We cannot educate future leaders, create new knowledge, or improve the well-being of our communities when members of our community are subject to gender-based harassment. As the Academies report makes clear, we in higher education need to fundamentally alter our climate and culture.

Recognizing that a collective effort is needed to prevent and effectively respond to gender-based harassment, Boston University is joining the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to form an Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education. Along with the other institutional members of the Action Collaborative, we will work to enact evidence-based policies and practices that will prevent harassment and promote a culture of respect.

We look forward to developing new approaches to prevent harassment, implementing and testing new programs and policies, setting a research agenda for the problem of harassment, and measuring the results from these new activities. Boston University commits to supporting the goals of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education.