

## 2008 PROCLAMATION AND PLEDGE

The number of men who commit violent acts on women is a small percentage of the male population, yet violence against women continues to pervade our culture. Our silent consent and unawareness allows the negative effects of patriarchy and dominance to permeate our society and produce a culture that accepts, condones, and allows violence against women to continue, despite our moral objections.

As men, we are gathered here today to join the fight to stop violence against women. We recognize that this fight is not about helping seemingly weak or needy women, but it is about the future of society and the greater good. We are not joining this fight because we believe that women are inferior or are in “need” of our help. All people are negatively affected by the extreme social requirements that encourage violence, and we challenge these conceptions of masculinity. We stand here before you today because we believe it is the right thing to do and the best thing to do.

Men must constantly and vigilantly work amongst themselves and alongside women to help stop the violence that has already claimed the lives of so many of our mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters. We are here to stand up and make a pledge to stop this violence. We agree to this pledge for ourselves, the women in our lives, and the greater good of society.

Men (turn to fraternity and athletic team members). Please rise and join me in making this commitment to stand up and speak out in order to stop violence against women.

This proclamation, as adapted from numerous organizations committed to ending violence, will serve as our official pledge to take a stand, and take back the night.

I will now light the “Survivor Candle,” which commemorates those lost and symbolizes our ongoing commitment to a future without gendered violence.

[light candle]

(To gentlemen) As I read the five prefaces of our proclamation, please join me by lighting your corresponding pledge candle.

## Five Prefaces of TBTN Proclamation

### I understand..

- That men must play a critical role in breaking the cycle of violence

(Pause while the candle is lit)

### I understand..

- That what I do and say can either encourage or discourage stereotypes that can lead to sexual assault and domestic violence

(Pause while the candle is lit)

### I understand..

- That it is my duty to speak out about sexist values, attitudes, and beliefs; therefore, I will challenge inappropriate remarks, jokes, and stories

(Pause while the candle is lit)

### I understand..

- That men also suffer from the destructive effects of patriarchy and violence against women

(Pause while the candle is lit)

### I understand..

- That this fight is not blindly blaming men for the violence that exists in society, but instead, this fight is asking men to speak up and become part of the solution.

(Pause while the candle is lit)

With a commitment to these prefaces in place, I do hereby declare you as leaders against sexual assault and domestic violence.

Please gather your pledge card, and help me make this commitment as we read the final portion of the pledge together:

*I pledge to join the fight to stop violence against women.*

*I pledge to recognize and oppose sexual harassment and sexually inappropriate behavior.*

*I will treat all women in my life with dignity, respect, and equality.*

*Faced with silence, I will speak.*

*Faced with ignorance, I will educate.*

*Faced with tragedy, I will intervene.*

*I pledge to stand up, speak out, and demand action from my family, friends, and community.*

*I will add my voice.                      I will add my awareness.                      I will add...my hands.*

[5 fraternity presidents/sports team captains will dip their hand in purple paint, and "Sign" the proclamation with an official "handprint"]

\*President Bradley is encouraged to sign at this time as well, but it is not necessary