

For Immediate Release

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Independent Report on Strauss Abuse at OSU Finds University Knew of Abuse for Decades

Plaintiffs and attorneys in mass action against the University demand accountability and justice

Investigators from Perkins Coie, the law firm hired by The Ohio State University's Special Counsel to investigate widespread reports of sexual abuse by Dr. Richard Strauss, write in a report today that "Despite the persistence, seriousness, and regularity of [] complaints" of sexual abuse from students since 1979, "no meaningful action was taken by the University to investigate the concerns until January 1996." Even then, officials at the highest levels of the University kept Strauss as a tenured faculty member until 1998, gave him an emeritus appointment in 1998, did not inform any students that Strauss was a sexual predator, and permitted Strauss to run ads in the University newspaper about his off-campus private men's clinic for OSU students and others.

In 1996, OSU investigated student complaints against Strauss. Although that investigation led to Strauss being removed from both Student Health and Athletics, his status as a tenured professor at OSU remained intact until his death in 2005, and allowed him to continue abusing OSU students off campus.

The independent investigation by Perkins Coie confirms that Strauss sexually abused at least 177 student-patients in his 20 years at OSU. The investigation also found that "more than 50 individuals who were members of the OSU Athletics Department staff during Strauss' time at the University corroborated these student accounts."

Steve Snyder-Hill, a named plaintiff in the mass action against OSU brought by 39 former Ohio State students alleging abuse by Strauss, had this response: "Today's report on Ohio State's actions is infuriating and re-traumatizing for me. It will take much more than an apology for the University to atone for its harm to me and so many other young men abused by Dr. Strauss and ignored by Ohio State. The University must ensure that no one like Strauss will ever be protected in this way again when they harm members of the Ohio State community."

"Ohio State abandoned and betrayed hundreds and likely thousands of its students over decades," said [Ilann M. Maazel](#), co-counsel for the mass plaintiffs in the Snyder-Hill case. "OSU's conduct is appalling, indefensible, unforgivable."

“The University’s apology to the survivors of Strauss’ abuse would have been hollow even 20 years ago. Today, it is shockingly ineffective,” said [Adele P. Kimmel](#), also co-counsel. “The survivors need action, not mere words. The University needs to offer a concrete plan, both to make amends to all the students harmed by its facilitation of Strauss’s decades of abuse and to ensure that the University never lets something like this happen again.”

“As we suspected from the outset, OSU knew but intentionally failed to act upon the many cries for help by the hundreds of OSU male students who suffered sexual abuse by Dr Strauss,” said [Scott E. Smith](#). “The systemic sexual abuse, although preventable, was horrifically nurtured by OSU when they chose not to act, turning a blind eye to those they had a duty to protect.”

The plaintiffs in this case are represented by Ilann M. Maazel and Debra Greenberger of Emery Celli Brinckerhoff & Abady LLC, Scott E. Smith and Brian Noethlich of Scott Elliot Smith LPA, and Adele Kimmel of Public Justice. More on the case is available [here](#).

Named plaintiff Steve Snyder-Hill is available for comment today.

A redacted version of the Perkins Coie report is available [here](#).

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