Senate passes bill recognising male as rape victims

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Sunday Aborisade, Abuja  
  
The Senate on Tuesday passed a bill seeking to recognise boys and men as victims of rape.  
  
The bill also prescribes life jail for kidnappers.  
  
The current maximum sentence for the offence is 10 years imprisonment.  
  
The bill contains amendments to the criminal code act.  
  
The proposed legislation, sponsored by Senator Oluremi Tinubu, is titled, ‘A bill for an Act to amend the Criminal Code Act CAP. C.38, Laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 2004’.  
  
It also seeks to delete the statute of limitation on defilement, increase punishment for the offence of kidnapping, and remove gender restrictions in the offence of rape and other related matters.  
  
The bill also eliminates the time frame for prosecuting defilement cases by increasing the period from two months to as many years as the victim decides to take up the matter.  
  
It removes gender restrictions on the offence of rape by explaining that both male and female could be raped.  
  
The bill passed third reading on Tuesday after a report on it was presented by the Chairman of the Committee on Judiciary, Human Rights and Legal Matters.  
  
The proposed legislation is coming two weeks after the upper chamber passed a bill to prohibit sexual harassment in tertiary institutions last week.