As part of a national movement that has states re-examining their laws on rape and marriage, Minnesota legislators have removed statutory language that allowed for a “pre-existing relationship defense” in cases of criminal sexual assault. HF 15 was signed into law in early May by Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz.

Prior to the bill’s passage, Minnesota law stated that “a person does not commit criminal sexual conduct ... if the actor and complainant were adults cohabitating in an ongoing voluntary sexual relationship at the time of the alleged offense.” The problem with this “marital rape exemption” was underscored by Jenny Teeson, who, in testimony this year to Minnesota legislators, recounted how she had discovered video footage of her then-husband drugging and raping her.

According to the Chicago Tribune, every state has a law making forcible marital rape a crime. However, citing research from the nonprofit organization AEquitas, the newspaper lists three states in the Midwest — Iowa, Michigan, and Iowa — as among 17 nationwide that have some form of an exemption for spouses who rape partners when these partners are drugged or otherwise incapacitated.