

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 149

Recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 14, 2011

Mr. CASEY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Whereas on average, a person is sexually assaulted in the United States every 2½ minutes;

Whereas the Department of Justice reports that more than 200,000 people in the United States are sexually assaulted each year;

Whereas 1 in 6 women and 1 in 33 men have been victims of rape or attempted rape;

Whereas the Department of Defense received 2,908 reports of sexual assault involving members of the Armed Forces in fiscal year 2008, representing an 8 percent increase from fiscal year 2007;

Whereas children and young adults are most at risk of sexual assault, as 44 percent of sexual assault victims are under 18 years of age, and 80 percent are under 30 years of age;

Whereas sexual assault affects women, men, and children of all racial, social, religious, age, ethnic, and economic groups in the United States;

Whereas women, children, and men suffer multiple types of sexual violence, including acquaintance, stranger, spousal, and gang rape, incest, child sexual molestation, forced prostitution, trafficking, forced pornography, ritual abuse, sexual harassment, and stalking;

Whereas it is estimated that the percentage of completed or attempted rape victimization among women in institutions of higher education is between 20 and 25 percent over the course of a college career;

Whereas, in addition to the immediate physical and emotional costs, sexual assault has associated consequences that may include post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, major depression, homelessness, eating disorders, and suicide;

Whereas only 41 percent of sexual assault victims pursue prosecution by reporting their attack to law enforcement agencies;

Whereas $\frac{2}{3}$ of sexual crimes are committed by persons who are not strangers to the victims;

Whereas sexual assault survivors suffer emotional scars long after the physical scars have healed;

Whereas, because of advances in DNA technology, law enforcement agencies have the potential to identify the rapists in tens of thousands of unsolved rape cases;

Whereas aggressive prosecution can lead to the incarceration of rapists and therefore prevent those individuals from committing further crimes;

Whereas national, State, territory, and tribal coalitions, community-based rape crisis centers, and other organizations across the United States are committed to increasing public awareness of sexual violence and its prevalence, and to eliminating sexual violence through prevention and education;

Whereas important partnerships have been formed among criminal and juvenile justice agencies, health professionals, public health workers, educators, first responders, and victim service providers;

Whereas free, confidential help is available to all survivors of sexual assault through the National Sexual Assault Hotline, more than 1,000 rape crisis centers across the United States, and other organizations that provide services to assist survivors of sexual assault;

Whereas in 2011, the Department of Defense and the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) launched the DoD Safe Helpline, which provides live, one-on-one help to members of the United States Armed Forces who have been sexually assaulted;

Whereas the DoD Safe Helpline provides live help to active duty personnel and other members of the DoD community worldwide by phone (877-995-5247) and online at SafeHelpline.org, as well as installation-based referrals via texting;

Whereas, according to a 2010 survey of rape crisis centers by the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, 72 percent of programs have experienced a reduction in funding

over 2009 levels, 56 percent have experienced a reduction in staffing, 23 percent have a waiting list for services, and funding and staffing cuts have resulted in an overall 50 percent reduction in the provision of institutional advocacy services;

Whereas individual and collective efforts reflect the dream of the people of the United States for a Nation where individuals and organizations actively work to prevent all forms of sexual violence and no sexual assault victim goes unserved or ever feels that there is no path to justice; and

Whereas April is recognized as “National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That—

2 (1) it is the sense of the Senate that—

3 (A) National Sexual Assault Awareness
4 and Prevention Month provides a special oppor-
5 tunity to educate the people of the United
6 States about sexual violence and to encourage
7 the prevention of sexual assault, the improved
8 treatment of survivors of sexual assault, and
9 the prosecution of perpetrators of sexual as-
10 sault;

11 (B) it is appropriate to properly acknowl-
12 edge the more than 20,000,000 men and
13 women who have survived sexual assault in the
14 United States and salute the efforts of sur-

1 survivors, volunteers, and professionals who com-
2 bat sexual assault;

3 (C) national and community organizations
4 and private sector supporters should be recog-
5 nized and applauded for their work in pro-
6 moting awareness about sexual assault, pro-
7 viding information and treatment to survivors
8 of sexual assault, and increasing the number of
9 successful prosecutions of perpetrators of sexual
10 assault; and

11 (D) public safety, law enforcement, and
12 health professionals should be recognized and
13 applauded for their hard work and innovative
14 strategies to increase the percentage of sexual
15 assault cases that result in the prosecution and
16 incarceration of the offenders;

17 (2) the Senate strongly recommends that na-
18 tional and community organizations, businesses in
19 the private sector, institutions of higher education,
20 and the media promote, through National Sexual
21 Assault Awareness and Prevention Month, aware-
22 ness of sexual violence and strategies to decrease the
23 incidence of sexual assault; and

1 (3) the Senate supports the goals and ideals of
2 National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention
3 Month.

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