

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 603

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

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 28, 2022

Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. SMITH, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LUJÁN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

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

Whereas the Senate is committed to the awareness, prevention, and deterrence of sexual violence affecting individuals in the United States;

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (referred to in this preamble as the “CDC”), 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men experience sexual or physical violence and stalking by an intimate partner;

Whereas, according to the 2020 Child Maltreatment Report of the Department of Health and Human Services, child protection service agencies throughout the United States

substantiated, or found strong evidence to indicate, that 57,963 children under 18 years of age were victims of sexual abuse that year;

Whereas, according to the 2015 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men who have experienced a completed or attempted rape experienced it for the first time between the ages of 11 and 17;

Whereas sexual violence is a burden for many individuals who serve in the Armed Forces, and the Department of Defense estimates that approximately 20,500 members of the Armed Forces, including approximately 13,000 women and 7,500 men, experienced some form of contact or penetrative sexual assault during 2018;

Whereas, due to the unprecedented challenges presented by the COVID–19 pandemic, including mandatory stay-at-home orders, the needs of sexual assault victims have become even more complex and challenging;

Whereas sexual assault does not discriminate on any basis and can affect any individual in the United States;

Whereas sexual violence may take many forms, including—

- (1) acquaintance, stranger, spousal, and gang rape;
- (2) incest;
- (3) child sexual abuse;
- (4) elder sexual abuse;
- (5) sexual abuse and exploitation of underserved communities;
- (6) commercial sex trafficking;
- (7) sexual harassment; and
- (8) stalking;

Whereas studies have suggested that survivors of color face unique challenges, and more should be done to better understand the impact of sexual violence on communities of color;

Whereas studies have suggested that the rate at which American Indians and Alaska Natives experience sexual violence is significantly higher than for other populations in the United States;

Whereas, according to the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, in addition to the immediate physical and emotional costs, sexual assault has numerous adverse consequences, which can include post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, major depression, homelessness, eating disorders, and suicide;

Whereas, according to a 2019 CDC survey, the average cost of rape is \$122,461 for each victim over the victim's lifetime, totaling a \$3,100,000,000,000 economic burden for survivors of rape in the United States;

Whereas, according to the National Crime Victimization Survey, an average of only 23 percent of rapes or sexual assaults in the United States were reported to law enforcement agencies between 2019 and 2020;

Whereas many sexual assaults are not reported to law enforcement agencies, and many States have restrictive criminal statutes of limitations, which enable many perpetrators to evade punishment for their crimes;

Whereas advances in deoxyribonucleic acid (commonly known as "DNA") technology have enabled law enforcement agencies to identify and prosecute the perpetrators in tens of thousands of previously unsolved sexual assault cases;

Whereas incarceration of sexual assault perpetrators can prevent perpetrators from committing additional crimes;

Whereas, according to a March 2021 survey by the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, 45 percent of rape crisis centers lack a therapist on staff, and 76 percent of programs had an increased demand for services in the past year;

Whereas national, State, territorial, and Tribal coalitions, community-based rape crisis centers, culturally-specific sexual assault organizations, and other organizations across the United States are committed to—

- (1) eliminating sexual violence through prevention and education; and
- (2) increasing public awareness of sexual violence and the prevalence of sexual violence;

Whereas thousands of volunteers and staff at rape crisis centers, State coalitions against sexual assault, culturally specific sexual assault organizations, and nonprofit organizations across the United States play an important role in making crisis hotlines and other services available to survivors of sexual assault;

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 victims and survivors of sexual assault through—

- (1) the victim service programs of the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (commonly known and referred to in this preamble as “RAINN”), including the National Sexual Assault Hotline—

- (A) by telephone at 800–656–HOPE; and
- (B) online at <https://hotline.rainn.org>; and
- (2) more than 1,500 sexual assault service providers across the United States;

Whereas the victim service programs of RAINN, including the National Sexual Assault Hotline, help more than 300,000 survivors and their loved ones each year;

Whereas the Department of Defense provides the Safe Helpline, Safe HelpRoom, and Safe Helpline mobile application, each of which provide support and help to members of the Department of Defense community—

- (1) by telephone at 877–995–5247; and
- (2) online at <https://SafeHelpline.org>;

Whereas individual and collective efforts reflect the dream of the people of the United States—

- (1) for individuals and organizations to actively work to prevent all forms of sexual violence; and
- (2) for no victim of sexual assault to be unserved or feel that there is no path to justice; and

Whereas April 2022 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—

6 (i) educate the people of the United
7 States about sexual violence; and

1 (ii) encourage—

2 (I) the prevention of sexual as-
3 sault;

4 (II) improvement in the treat-
5 ment of survivors of sexual assault;
6 and

7 (III) the prosecution of perpetra-
8 tors of sexual assault;

9 (B) it is appropriate to properly acknowl-
10 edge survivors of sexual assault and to com-
11 mend the volunteers and professionals who as-
12 sist those survivors in their efforts to heal;

13 (C) national and community organizations
14 and private sector supporters should be recog-
15 nized and applauded for their work in—

16 (i) promoting awareness about sexual
17 assault;

18 (ii) providing information and treat-
19 ment to survivors of sexual assault; and

20 (iii) increasing the number of success-
21 ful prosecutions of perpetrators of sexual
22 assault; and

23 (D) public safety, law enforcement, and
24 health professionals should be recognized and
25 applauded for their hard work and innovative

1 strategies to ensure perpetrators of sexual as-
2 sault are held accountable; and
3 (2) the Senate supports the goals and ideals of
4 National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention
5 Month.

