

**Assembly Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 156**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Saldana**  
**(Coauthor: Assembly Member Ma)**  
(Coauthor: Senator Romero)

April 13, 2010

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 156—Relative to Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Denim Day California.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 156, as introduced, Saldana. Sexual Assault Awareness Month: Denim Day California.

This measure would resolve that the month of April be designated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, would recognize April 21, 2010, as Denim Day California, and would encourage everyone to wear jeans on that day to help communicate the message that there is no excuse for, and never an invitation to, rape.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, In 2008, California rape crisis centers provided  
2 direct crisis intervention services to 28,853 people and provided  
3 community education services for more than 150,000 people; and  
4 WHEREAS, The American Medical Association has stated that  
5 a “woman is raped every 46 seconds in the United States” and that  
6 sexual assault is a “silent epidemic”; and  
7 WHEREAS, Women, children, and men are all victims of sexual  
8 assault and it is estimated that one in three women, one in four  
9 girls, one in six boys, and one in 11 men will be victims at least  
10 once in their lifetimes; and

1 WHEREAS, Rape and sexual assault affects women, children,  
2 and men of all racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds; and

3 WHEREAS, Women, children, and men suffer multiple types  
4 of sexual violence including acquaintance rape, stranger rape,  
5 sexual assault by an intimate partner, gang rape, incest, serial rape,  
6 ritual abuse, sexual harassment, child sexual molestation,  
7 prostitution, pornography, and stalking; and

8 WHEREAS, In addition to the immediate physical and emotional  
9 costs, sexual assault may also have associated severe and  
10 long-lasting consequences of post-traumatic stress disorder,  
11 substance abuse, major depression, homelessness, eating disorders,  
12 and suicide; and

13 WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
14 has identified sexual assault as a significant, costly, and preventable  
15 health issue; and

16 WHEREAS, A coalition of rape crisis centers and their allies,  
17 known as the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault, has  
18 emerged to directly confront this crisis with the cooperation of law  
19 enforcement agencies, churches, health care providers, and other  
20 helping professionals from California's diverse communities; and

21 WHEREAS, It is our responsibility to support rape survivors  
22 by treating them with dignity, compassion, and respect; and

23 WHEREAS, It is important to recognize the compassion and  
24 dedication of the individuals involved in this effort, applaud their  
25 commitment, and increase public understanding of this significant  
26 problem; and

27 WHEREAS, It is important to recognize the strength, courage,  
28 and challenges of the victims and survivors of sexual assault and  
29 their families and friends as they struggle to cope with the reality  
30 of sexual assault; and

31 WHEREAS, It is important to recognize that not all victims of  
32 sexual assault survive, either at the time of the assault or later, due  
33 to the horrific long-term trauma that sexual assault often inflicts  
34 upon victims; and

35 WHEREAS, There are rape prevention and education efforts  
36 underway throughout California to challenge the societal myths  
37 and behaviors that perpetuate rape and to engage communities in  
38 a common goal of ending sexual assault; and

1 WHEREAS, It is crucially important to hold perpetrators  
2 responsible for sexual attacks, and to prevent sexual violence at  
3 every opportunity; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1998, the Italian Supreme Court overturned the  
5 conviction of a man who sexually assaulted an 18-year-old woman  
6 after the court determined that, “because the victim wore very,  
7 very tight jeans, she had to help him remove them, and by removing  
8 the jeans it was no longer rape but consensual sex”; and

9 WHEREAS, Enraged by the court decision, within a matter of  
10 hours the women in the Italian Parliament launched into immediate  
11 action and protested by wearing jeans to work; and

12 WHEREAS, Nations and states throughout the world have  
13 followed the lead of the Italian Parliament by designating their  
14 own “Denim Day” to raise public awareness about rape and sexual  
15 assault; and

16 WHEREAS, Harmful attitudes about rape and sexual assault  
17 allow these crimes to persist and allow survivors to be revictimized  
18 through victim-blaming attitudes and unresponsive government  
19 systems; and

20 WHEREAS, California is a national leader within the judicial,  
21 criminal justice, medical, rape crisis, and health communities in  
22 promoting victim-centered approaches to victims of crime; now,  
23 therefore, be it

24 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*  
25 *thereof concurring*, That the month of April shall be designated  
26 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month; and be it further

27 *Resolved*, That the Legislature hereby recognizes April 21, 2010,  
28 as Denim Day California and encourages everyone to wear jeans  
29 on that day to help communicate the message that there is no  
30 excuse for, and never an invitation to, rape; and be it further

31 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
32 of this resolution to the author for distribution.

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