

**Introduced by Senator Evans**

February 18, 2011

---

---

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 15—Relative to Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Denim Day California.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 15, as introduced, Evans. 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 27, 2011, 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 or sexual assault.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, In 2009, California rape crisis centers provided
- 2 direct crisis intervention services to 28,993 individuals and
- 3 provided community education services for more than 150,000
- 4 people; and
- 5 WHEREAS, The American Medical Association has stated that
- 6 a “woman is raped every 46 seconds in the United States” and that
- 7 sexual assault is a “silent epidemic”; and
- 8 WHEREAS, Women, children, and men are all victims of sexual
- 9 assault and it is estimated that one in three women, one in four
- 10 girls, one in six boys, and one in 11 men will be victims at least
- 11 once in their lifetimes; and
- 12 WHEREAS, Rape and sexual assault impacts women, children,
- 13 and men of all racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds; and

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

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

11 WHEREAS, The federal Centers for Disease Control and  
12 Prevention have identified sexual assault as a significant, costly,  
13 and preventable health issue; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

37 WHEREAS, It is crucially important to hold perpetrators  
38 responsible for sexual attacks, and to prevent sexual violence at  
39 every opportunity; and

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

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

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

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

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

21 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*  
22 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature designates the month of  
23 April 2011 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month; and be it further

24 *Resolved*, That the Legislature recognizes April 27, 2011, as  
25 “Denim Day California” and encourages everyone to wear jeans  
26 on that day to help communicate the message that there is no  
27 excuse for, and never an invitation to, rape and sexual assault.