

## Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 15

### RESOLUTION CHAPTER 76

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

[Filed with Secretary of State August 25, 2011.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 15, 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.

WHEREAS, In 2009, California rape crisis centers provided direct crisis intervention services to 28,993 individuals and provided community education services for more than 150,000 people; and

WHEREAS, The American Medical Association has stated that a “woman is raped every 46 seconds in the United States” and that sexual assault is a “silent epidemic”; and

WHEREAS, Women, children, and men are all victims of sexual assault and it is estimated that one in three women, one in four girls, one in six boys, and one in 11 men will be victims at least once in their lifetimes; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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