

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 129

Introduced by Assembly Member Brown
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Lowenthal)
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Buchanan, Eggman, Beth Gaines,
Grove, Melendez, Quirk-Silva, Salas, Skinner, Waldron, Weber,
and Yamada)
(Coauthors: Senators Hill, Lieu, Pavley, and Vidak)

April 1, 2014

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 129—Relative to sexual assault.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 129, as introduced, Brown. Sexual Assault Awareness Month: Denim Day California.

This measure would designate the month of April 2014 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and would recognize April 23, 2014, as Denim Day California.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, In 2012, California rape crisis centers provided
2 direct crisis intervention services to 29,208 individuals, provided
3 6,283 sexual assault forensic examinations, and provided
4 community education services for almost 129,000 people; and
5 WHEREAS, Women, children, and men are all victims of sexual
6 assault, and it is estimated that nearly one in two women and one
7 in five men experience sexual violence other than rape throughout
8 their lifetime; and
9 WHEREAS, The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence
10 Survey reports that there are over 22 million survivors of rape

1 throughout the United States and two million of those survivors
2 of rape are currently living in the State of California; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

36 WHEREAS, There are rape prevention and education efforts
37 underway throughout California to challenge the societal myths
38 and behaviors that perpetuate rape and to engage communities in
39 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 Legislature designates the month of
26 April 2014 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month; and be it further

27 *Resolved*, That the Legislature recognizes April 23, 2014, as
28 Denim Day California and encourages everyone to wear jeans on
29 that day to help communicate the message that there is no excuse
30 for, and never an invitation to commit, rape; and be it further

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