

Introduced by Senator Alquist

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April 6, 2005

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 39—Relative to Sexual Assault
Awareness Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 39, as introduced, Alquist. Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

This measure would resolve that the month of April be designated
henceforth as Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, The American Medical Association has stated
- 2 that a “woman is raped every 46 seconds in the United States”
- 3 and that sexual assault is a “silent epidemic”; and
- 4 WHEREAS, In California, there were 9,918 forcible rapes
- 5 reported in 2003; and
- 6 WHEREAS, It is estimated by the Bureau of Justice Statistics
- 7 that over 70 percent of rapes are never reported to police; and
- 8 WHEREAS, Sixty-seven percent of all victims of sexual
- 9 assault reported to law enforcement agencies were under 18 years
- 10 of age, and 34 percent of all victims were under 12 years of age;
- 11 and
- 12 WHEREAS, One of every seven victims of sexual assault
- 13 reported to law enforcement agencies were under six years of

1 age, and 40 percent of the offenders who victimized children
2 under six years of age were under 18 years of age; and

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

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

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

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

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

23 WHEREAS, Women, children, and men in our state have the
24 right to be safe from sexual violence in their homes, at school, at
25 work, and on the streets; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

9 WHEREAS, There are rape prevention and education efforts
10 underway throughout California to challenge the societal myths
11 and behaviors that perpetuate rape and to engage communities in
12 a common goal of ending sexual assault; now, therefore, be it

13 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
14 *thereof concurring*, That, henceforth, the month of April shall be
15 designated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month; and be it further

16 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit
17 copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, to
18 the Governor, to the Director of the United States Justice
19 Department's Office for Victims of Crime, and to each Senator
20 and Representative from California in the Congress of the United
21 States.