

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 26, 2012

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 24, 2012

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 123

Introduced by Assembly Member Bonnie Lowenthal

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Achadjian, Alejo, Allen, Ammiano, Atkins, Beall, Bill Berryhill, Block, Blumenfield, Bonilla, Bradford, Brownley, Buchanan, Butler, Charles Calderon, Campos, Carter, Chesbro, Conway, Cook, Davis, Dickinson, Donnelly, Eng, Feuer, Fong, Fuentes, Beth Gaines, Galgiani, Garrick, Gatto, Gordon, Gorell, Grove, Hagman, Hall, Roger Hernández, Hill, Huber, Hueso, Huffman, Jeffries, Lara, Logue, Ma, Mansoor, Mendoza, Miller, Mitchell, Monning, Morrell, Nestande, Nielsen, Olsen, Pan, Perea, John A. Pérez, V. Manuel Pérez, Portantino, Silva, Skinner, Smyth, Solorio, Swanson, Torres, Valadao, Wagner, Wieckowski, Williams, and Yamada)

March 6, 2012

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 123—Relative to Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Denim Day California.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 123, as amended, Bonnie Lowenthal. Sexual Assault Awareness Month: Denim Day California.

This measure would designate the month of April 2012 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, would recognize April 25, 2012, 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 commit, rape.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, In 2011, California rape crisis centers provided
2 direct crisis intervention services to 29,292 individuals, provided
3 6,473 sexual assault forensic examinations, and provided
4 community education services for more than 127,000 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
11 throughout the United States and 2 million of those survivors of
12 rape are currently living in the State of California; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

34 WHEREAS, It is important to recognize the compassion and
35 dedication of the individuals involved in this effort, applaud their
36 commitment, and increase public understanding of this significant
37 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, due
7 to the horrific long-term trauma that sexual assault often inflicts
8 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; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

36 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
37 *thereof concurring*, That the month of April 2012 shall be
38 designated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month; and be it further

39 *Resolved*, That the Legislature recognizes April 25, 2012, as
40 “Denim Day California” and encourages everyone to wear jeans

- 1 on that day to help communicate the message that there is no
- 2 excuse for, and never an invitation to commit, rape.

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