

By Senator Fasano

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing April 2010 as "Sexual Assault Awareness Month" in Florida.

WHEREAS, sexual assault continues to be a major social crisis in our society, with one in nine women in Florida a survivor of sexual violence, and

WHEREAS, sexual assault affects many Floridians, either directly, as the survivor of sexual assault, or, indirectly, as a family member, friend, neighbor, or co-worker of the survivor, and

WHEREAS, sexual assault has a devastating effect on survivors, affecting every aspect of their lives, often leading to post-traumatic stress disorder and increasing the risk of depression, suicide, homelessness, and substance abuse, and

WHEREAS, volunteers and service providers in Florida's 30 certified rape crisis centers work to provide a continuum of care to sexual assault survivors through 24-hour hotlines, counseling, support groups, advocacy, medical care, and education, and

WHEREAS, the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence seeks to improve services for survivors of sexual assault and to prevent future sexual assault through public awareness and services for victims, and

WHEREAS, Lauren's Kids, Inc., the organization founded by child sexual abuse survivor and educator Lauren Book-Lim, in conjunction with the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence, has organized a 500-mile, healing-journey walk across Florida called "Walk In My Shoes," which symbolizes the long and painful

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30 road to recovery for survivors of sexual assault, and

31 WHEREAS, this "Walk In My Shoes" walk from Aventura to
32 Tallahassee will help provide awareness, guidance, and support
33 for survivors while also working to educate adults and children
34 about sexual assault, including the message that it is
35 acceptable to tell others about abuse that they have
36 experienced, and

37 WHEREAS, a 2010 survey of rape crisis centers by the
38 National Alliance to End Sexual Violence indicates that 70
39 percent of rape crisis programs have experienced a reduction in
40 funding over the past year, 57 percent have experienced a
41 reduction in staffing, 25 percent currently have a waiting list
42 for services, and funding cuts have resulted in an overall 50
43 percent reduction in the provision of advocacy services, and

44 WHEREAS, the Florida Senate recognizes the vital importance
45 of designating a time devoted to increasing public awareness and
46 support of agencies providing services to sexual assault
47 survivors, and envisions a future in which all communities are
48 free of sexual violence, NOW, THEREFORE,

49
50 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

51
52 That April 2010 is recognized as "Sexual Assault Awareness
53 Month" in Florida.

54 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution, with
55 the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to the Florida
56 Council Against Sexual Violence and Lauren's Kids, Inc., as a
57 tangible token of the sentiments of the Florida Senate.