

By Senator Benacquisto

27-04239-11

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing April 2011 as "Sexual Assault Awareness Month" in Florida.

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

WHEREAS, sexual assault continues to affect many Floridians, either directly, as the survivor of sexual assault, or indirectly, as a family member, friend, neighbor, or coworker of a survivor, and

WHEREAS, men and boys can be victims of sexual violence as children, teens, or adults and are often reluctant to report the crime of sexual assault, and

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

WHEREAS, volunteers and service providers in 30 certified rape crisis centers work to provide a continuum of quality 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 victim services, and

WHEREAS, child sexual abuse survivor and educator Lauren Book founded the organization Lauren's Kids, Inc., which, in

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30 conjunction with the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence,
31 has organized "Walk In My Shoes," a 1,000-mile walk from Key
32 West to Tallahassee, which symbolizes the long and painful road
33 to recovery for survivors of sexual assault, and

34 WHEREAS, "Walk In My Shoes" is promoting awareness,
35 guidance, and support for survivors, educating adults and
36 children about sexual assault, promoting the message that it is
37 acceptable for survivors to tell others about the abuse they
38 have experienced, and offering hope for healing for all
39 survivors of sexual assault, and

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

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46 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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48 That April 2011 is recognized as "Sexual Assault Awareness
49 Month" in Florida.

50 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, with
51 the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to the Florida
52 Council Against Sexual Violence and Lauren's Kids, Inc., as a
53 tangible token of the sentiments of the Florida Senate.