

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To declare the month of April 2017 as “Sexual Assault Awareness Month” in the District of Columbia, to recognize and support healthy human development, and to prevent child and adult sexual abuse.

WHEREAS, women’s organized protests against sexual violence began in the late 1970s in England with ‘Take Back the Night’ marches in direct response to the violence that women encountered as they walked the streets at night;

WHEREAS, these activities became more coordinated and soon developed into a movement that extended to the United States and, in 1978, the first ‘Take Back the Night’ events in the United States were held in San Francisco and New York City;

WHEREAS, the month of April has been designated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the United States and was first observed nationally in April 2001, after the alarming statistics of sexual assaults and underreporting became more apparent;

WHEREAS, sexual assault awareness activities have expanded to include the issue of sexual violence against men and men’s participation in ending sexual violence;

WHEREAS, according to the Department of Justice’s National Crime Victimization Survey, every 2 minutes someone in the United States is sexually assaulted;

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention’s National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, one out of every 5 women has been the victim of an attempted or completed rape in her lifetime;

WHEREAS, nearly 3 million men in the United States have been the victims of sexual assault or rape;

36 WHEREAS, girls 16-19 years of age are 4 times more likely than the general population
37 to be victims of rape, attempted rape, or sexual assault;

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39 WHEREAS, the rate of rape and sexual assault is 1.2 times higher for young people not
40 in college than it is for college students;

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42 WHEREAS, victims of sexual assault are 3 times more likely to suffer from depression, 6
43 times more likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, 13 times more likely to abuse
44 alcohol, 26 times more likely to abuse drugs, and 4 times more likely to contemplate suicide;

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46 WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, among female
47 victims of partner violence who filed for a protective order, 68% reported that their intimate
48 partner raped them and 20% reported a rape-related pregnancy;

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50 WHEREAS, approximately 80% of sexual assaults are committed by someone known to
51 the victim and 38% of rapists are a friend or acquaintance;

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53 WHEREAS 14% of rapists will be repeat offenders.

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55 WHEREAS, despite the prevalence of sexual violence and its disproportionate effect on
56 at-risk populations, such as the LGBT community, sexual violence remains the most
57 underreported crime;

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59 WHEREAS, despite these harrowing statistics, sexual assault has decreased by 60% since
60 1993, thanks to the awareness campaigns by organizations like Break The Cycle, the D.C. Rape
61 Crisis Center, the D.C. Coalition to End Sexual Assault, Collective Action for Safe Spaces, Stop
62 Street Harassment, and Men Can Stop Rape, and historic gains made by the Violence Against
63 Women Act and other laws passed and being enforced around the country; and

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65 WHEREAS, the District of Columbia now joins all 50 states, the territories, and other
66 major cities in recognizing the benefits of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

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68 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this
69 resolution may be cited as the “Sexual Assault Awareness Month Recognition Resolution of
70 2017.”

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72 Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes and supports Sexual Assault
73 Awareness Month, urging citizens to show their support for all victims of sexual assault and the
74 fight against violent crimes. By working together and pooling our resources during the month of
75 April, District residents can highlight sexual violence as a major public health, public safety,
76 human rights and social justice issue and reinforce the need for prevention.

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78 Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in
79 the District of Columbia Register.

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