

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 18

BY SENATORS MORRELL AND PETERSON AND REPRESENTATIVES ADAMS,
WESLEY BISHOP, GISCLAIR AND PATRICK WILLIAMS

A RESOLUTION

To designate the month of April 2015 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the state of Louisiana and to draw attention to the need for preventive measures.

WHEREAS, the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana recognizes that protection from sexual exploitation is a social right of all individuals, that implementation of legal safeguards to prevent sexual assault is essential to society, and that support provided to victims is the responsibility of governments, law enforcement, and social services; and

WHEREAS, sexual assault occurs when an individual is threatened, coerced, manipulated, or forced to engage in nonconsensual sexual activity; and

WHEREAS, a sexual offense is a profound violation of the body of the individual that includes illicit touching, drug facilitated date rape, spouse abuse, child abuse, elder abuse, stalking, and intimidation; and

WHEREAS, sexual assault is a serious crime that affects persons indiscriminate of race, age, gender, or economic status; infractions often go unreported to law enforcement authorities and without medical attention afforded to its victims; and

WHEREAS, grave statistics estimate that in the United States a rape occurs every two minutes; only thirty-two percent of rape assaults, roughly one in three, are reported to law enforcement, and of those reported cases, only two percent, or one in fifty rapists, are successfully prosecuted and incarcerated; and

WHEREAS, public policy advocates that reduction of the social effects of sexual assault risk requires focus upon multiple venues; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement authorities must thoroughly investigate the crime, gather and examine physical evidence, and apprehend predators; however, due to limited funding, rape evidence kits often go unprocessed and perpetrators continue to prey upon victims; and

WHEREAS, criminal justice systems are required to prosecute assault cases, render appropriate punishment, effectively rehabilitate sex offenders, and monitor their whereabouts through a lifelong sex offender registry; and

WHEREAS, mental health treatment, social services, and community outreach programs provide the victims of sexual exploitation with support and recovery, and survivors are empowered through advocacy, therapy, and self-autonomy; and

WHEREAS, the Sexual Assault Awareness Month campaign engages lawmakers and communities to join together in efforts of prevention, education, and intervention, and these endeavors are paramount in the fulfillment of the social contract that promotes a healthy environment and a culture of physical safety.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby designate the month of April 2015 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize that sexual violence is an issue of public health, human rights, and social justice that requires preventive efforts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to STAR, Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE