

A RESOLUTION recognizing March as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Kentucky and honoring Kentucky's 13 regional rape crisis centers.

WHEREAS, Kentucky has a shockingly high rate of sexual violence that must be brought into the public focus, because it cannot be reduced until it is openly recognized and addressed; and

WHEREAS, every Kentuckian is directly or indirectly affected and impacted by sexual violence; and

WHEREAS, children are subjected to sexual violence at alarming rates, including commercial exploitation or human trafficking; and

WHEREAS, child victims of human trafficking are more likely to be labeled as "runaways" or "status offenders" than identified as victims of extreme sexual abuse; and

WHEREAS, emotional and physical scars resulting from sexual violence and human trafficking are severe and long-lasting; and

WHEREAS, it is important to recognize the strength, courage, and challenges faced by victims and survivors of sexual violence and their families and friends as they struggle to cope, and to acknowledge that not all victims of sexual violence survive at the time of assault or survive the horrific long-term trauma that often occurs in the wake of sexual violence; and

WHEREAS, a coalition of rape crisis centers known as the Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs formed 25 years ago to directly confront sexual violence with the cooperation of law enforcement agencies, churches, health care providers, military officials, juvenile justice professionals, school systems, and other helping professionals from Kentucky's diverse communities; and

WHEREAS, last year, Kentucky's regional rape crisis centers responded to well over 3,000 crisis calls, provided more than 17,000 counseling sessions, performed over 3,300 advocacy services, and provided over 3,800 educational programs for nearly 87,000 Kentuckians; and

WHEREAS, Kentucky's regional rape crisis centers are working with allies throughout the Commonwealth to prevent sexual violence by empowering Kentuckians to collaborate and act to prevent sexual violence; and

WHEREAS, it is important to recognize the compassion and dedication of the individuals involved in these efforts, to applaud their commitment, and to increase public awareness of this significant problem; and

WHEREAS, raising awareness about the societal myths and behaviors that perpetuate sexual violence and providing information and prevention strategies to all citizens is critical to the health and well-being of Kentuckians;

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

➔Section 1. The House of Representatives recognizes March as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Kentucky and applauds Kentucky's 13 regional rape crisis centers for their 25 years of dedicated efforts to assist victims and for their efforts to raise awareness of sexual assault.

➔Section 2. When the House of Representatives adjourns this day, it does so in honor of Kentucky's 13 regional rape crisis centers.

➔Section 3. The Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to Ms. Eileen Recktenwald, Executive Director, Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs, P.O. Box 4028, Frankfort, Kentucky 40604.