
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 94 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY McNEILL, PROBST, MADDEN, SCHLOSSBERG, HILL-EVANS,
FREEMAN, MERSKI, KINSEY, MALAGARI, SANCHEZ, GILLEN, MAYES,
HOWARD AND CERRATO, APRIL 28, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, APRIL 28, 2023

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of April 2023 as "Sexual Assault Awareness
2 Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, April is nationally recognized as "Sexual Assault
4 Awareness Month" to call attention to the fact that sexual
5 violence is widespread and impacts every community; and

6 WHEREAS, April 2023 is the 22nd anniversary of the first
7 recognition of "Sexual Assault Awareness Month"; and

8 WHEREAS, Prior to the first "Sexual Assault Awareness Month",
9 social activists brought the realities of the prevalence of
10 sexual violence to the forefront of public perception; and

11 WHEREAS, During the civil rights era, although the realities
12 of sexual assault and domestic violence all too often went
13 unspoken, challenges to social injustices opened the door to
14 begin tough conversations about the intersections of race-based
15 and gender-based violence; and

16 WHEREAS, The 1970s saw the establishment of the first rape
17 crisis center in San Francisco and the first Take Back the Night

1 event which protested all forms of sexual violence; and

2 WHEREAS, The reality of sexual violence received nationwide
3 recognition with the passage of the Violence Against Women Act
4 in 1993; and

5 WHEREAS, Before the first nationally observed "Sexual Assault
6 Awareness Month" in 2001, advocates held events and observances
7 related to sexual violence, including "Sexual Assault Awareness
8 Weeks," during the month of April; and

9 WHEREAS, The National Sexual Violence Resource Center has
10 designated the theme of "Sexual Assault Awareness Month" 2023 to
11 be "Drawing Connections: Prevention Demands Equity" to recognize
12 the inherent connections between systems of oppression and
13 sexual violence; and

14 WHEREAS, Sexual violence, which includes rape, sexual assault
15 and sexual harassment, continues to have a deep physical and
16 emotional trauma on those who have experienced it; and

17 WHEREAS, Rape in the United States occurs more frequently
18 than the public realizes, as 1 in 5 women and 1 in 67 men have
19 been raped in the United States; and

20 WHEREAS, Someone in the United States is the victim of sexual
21 assault every 98 seconds; and

22 WHEREAS, On postsecondary campuses, 1 in 5 women and 1 in 16
23 men are sexually assaulted at some point in their educational
24 career, and 90% of sexual assaults on college campuses go
25 unreported; and

26 WHEREAS, Young people experience disproportionate rates of
27 sexual violence with close to 70% of all reported incidents of
28 sexual violence involving a child under 18 years of age; and

29 WHEREAS, One in six boys and one in four girls experience
30 some form of sexual violence before they turn 18 years of age;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, Close to 30% of non-Hispanic Black women in the
3 United States are survivors of rape; and

4 WHEREAS, More than 80% of American Indian and Alaska Native
5 women have experienced some form of personal violence in their
6 lives; and

7 WHEREAS, More than 30% of Hispanic women have reported
8 experiencing unwanted sexual contact; and

9 WHEREAS, Lesbian and bisexual women experience sexual and
10 physical violence by intimate partners at a significantly higher
11 rate compared to straight women; and

12 WHEREAS, Gay and bisexual men are up to 15 times more likely
13 than heterosexual men to report having been sexually assaulted;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Nearly half of all transgender people experience
16 some form of sexual violence throughout their lifetime; and

17 WHEREAS, More than 90% of individuals with a developmental
18 disability experience sexual violence at least once in their
19 lifetime, and 49% experience 10 or more sexually abusive
20 incidents throughout their lives; and

21 WHEREAS, Only 27% of all incidents of sexual violence end in
22 arrest; and

23 WHEREAS, Communities can support survivors by believing their
24 stories, showing respect and championing their individual
25 support networks; and

26 WHEREAS, Individuals speaking out against inappropriate
27 jokes, offensive gestures, harmful attitudes and unwanted
28 actions make a positive impact toward ending sexual harassment,
29 abuse and assault; and

30 WHEREAS, Consent and boundaries can be violated online in a

1 number of ways; and

2 WHEREAS, Individuals can work together to make their
3 communities safer by providing prevention education and
4 increasing public awareness to avoid future harm from sexual
5 violence; therefore be it

6 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the
7 month of April 2023 as "Sexual Assault Awareness Month" in
8 Pennsylvania; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
10 22nd anniversary of "Sexual Assault Awareness Month" to empower
11 more survivors and their loved ones on their journey to help,
12 hope and healing; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives encourage
14 communities to understand their role in ending sexual violence
15 in Pennsylvania and the United States; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives encourage
17 communities to commit to making a difference to ensure that
18 online platforms are safe and respectful for everyone by
19 practicing consent, keeping kids safe and supporting survivors.