

**Substitute for House Resolution No. 63.**

A resolution to declare April 2017 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the state of Michigan.

Whereas, Sexual Assault Awareness Month calls attention to the fact that sexual violence is widespread and impacts women, children, and men of all racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds; and

Whereas, The term sexual assault refers to sexual contact or behavior that occurs without explicit consent of the victim; and

Whereas, According to the National Institute of Justice & Centers for Disease Control & Prevention's Prevalence, Incidence and Consequences of Violence Against Women Survey, one out of every six American women has been the victim of an attempted or completed rape in her lifetime and approximately 3 percent of American men or 1 in 33, have experienced an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime; and

Whereas, Child sexual abuse prevention must be a priority to confront the reality; and

Whereas, From 2009-2013, Child Protective Services agencies substantiated, or found strong evidence to indicate that, 63,000 children a year were victims of sexual abuse and a majority of child victims are ages 12-17. Of victims under the age of 18, 34 percent of victims of sexual assault and rape are under the age of 12 and 66 percent of victims of sexual assault and rape are ages 12-17; and

Whereas, Michigan State Police statistics indicate that 11,873 sexual assault related offences were reported to law enforcement in 2013; and

Whereas, Sexual violence can deeply and enduringly impact survivors on psychological, emotional, and social levels; and

Whereas, Ninety-four percent of women who are raped experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms during the two weeks following the rape and approximately 70 percent of rape or sexual assault victims experience moderate to severe distress, a larger percentage than for any other violent crime studied in the National Crime Victimization Survey by the Bureau of Justice Statistics; and

Whereas, Sexual violence is an intolerable violent crime with public health implications for every person in Michigan; and

Whereas, Access to informed and supportive services can greatly increase survivors' ability to heal from sexual assault; and

Whereas, Our state and individual communities must be committed to hold sexual assault perpetrators accountable for their heinous crimes; and

Whereas, When we actively increase education, awareness, and community involvement, we can help prevent sexual violence and create a safer environment for everyone; and

Whereas, We must work together to educate our entire population about what can be done to prevent sexual assault, support survivors, and ensure that survivors are not re-victimized; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body declare April 2017 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the state of Michigan. We strongly support the efforts of national, state, and local partners, and of every citizen, to actively engage in public and private efforts to prevent sexual violence and will take appropriate action and support one another to create a safer environment for all.