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H. RES. 193

Supporting the goals and ideals of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 26, 2013

Ms. MOORE submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

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RESOLUTION

Supporting the goals and ideals of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

Whereas, on average, a person is sexually assaulted in the United States every 2 minutes;

Whereas the Department of Justice reports that more than 200,000 Americans are sexually assaulted each year;

Whereas 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men have been victims of rape or attempted rape;

Whereas children and young adults are most at risk of sexual assault, as 44 percent of victims of sexual assault are under the age of 18, and 80 percent are under the age of 30;

Whereas sexual assault affects women, men, and children of all racial, social, religious, age, ethnic, ability, sexual orientation, and economic groups in the United States;

Whereas, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) recently expanded its definition of rape to include sexual assault against males, which will assist in making reporting of this devastating crime more accurate and provide a better understanding of its effects on victims;

Whereas, in addition to the immediate physical and emotional costs, sexual assault has associated consequences that may include post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, depression, homelessness, eating disorders, and suicide;

Whereas all forms of sexual violence are unacceptable, whether committed by a stranger, family member or acquaintance of the victim;

Whereas less than half of sexual assault victims pursue prosecution by reporting their attack to law enforcement agencies;

Whereas, by fully assessing the scope of the backlog of untested evidence in the possession of law enforcement and crime labs and by using DNA technology to eliminate the backlog, we have the potential to identify and prosecute rapists in tens of thousands of unsolved cases;

Whereas aggressive prosecution can lead to the incarceration of rapists, who tend to be serial criminals who methodically select their victims and plan their crimes, thereby preventing them from committing further crimes;

Whereas national, State, territory, and tribal coalitions, community-based sexual assault service providers, law enforcement agencies and other organizations across Amer-

ica are committed to increasing public awareness of sexual violence and its prevalence, and to eliminating it through improvements to the criminal justice system and programs to prevent crime and educate the public;

Whereas important partnerships have been formed among criminal and juvenile justice agencies, health professionals, public health workers, educators, first responders, and victim service providers;

Whereas free, confidential help is available to all victims and survivors of sexual assault through the National Sexual Assault Hotline (800–565–HOPE) and National Sexual Assault Online Hotline (online.rainn.org), and more than 1,100 sexual assault service providers across America;

Whereas the Department of Defense (DOD) estimates that more than 19,000 members of the Armed Forces are sexually assaulted each year;

Whereas the DOD Safe Helpline provides live help to Active duty service members and other members of the DOD community worldwide by phone (877–995–5247) and online at SafeHelpline.org, as well as installation-based referrals via texting;

Whereas, the Safe Helpline mobile app allows survivors of sexual assault in the military to create a customized self-care plan and connect to resources from anywhere in the world;

Whereas this month, the DOD Safe Helpline will launch the DOD Safe HelpRoom, a moderated online peer support service which will allow survivors of sexual assault in the military to connect with one another in a secure online environment;

Whereas, according to a 2012 survey of rape crisis centers by the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, 50 percent of programs have laid-off staff in the past year, with more than 100 advocates losing their jobs and more than 120 positions left vacant, and 65 percent of programs have a waiting list for counseling services;

Whereas individual and collective efforts reflect our dream for a Nation where citizens and organizations actively work to prevent all forms of sexual violence and no sexual assault victim goes unserved and no sexual assault perpetrator goes unpunished; and

Whereas April is recognized as ''National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(A) National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month provides a special opportunity to educate the people of the United States about sexual violence and to encourage the prevention of sexual assault, the improved treatment of its victims, and the prosecution of its perpetrators;

(B) it is appropriate to properly acknowledge the more than 20 million men and women who have survived sexual assault in the United States and salute the efforts of survivors, volun-

teers, and professionals who combat sexual assault;

(C) national and community organizations and private sector supporters should be recognized and applauded for their work in promoting awareness about sexual assault, providing information and treatment to its survivors, and increasing the number of successful prosecutions of its perpetrators; and

(D) public safety, law enforcement, and health professionals should be recognized and applauded for their hard work and innovative strategies to increase the percentage of sexual assault cases that result in the prosecution and incarceration of the offenders;

(2) the House of Representatives strongly recommends national and community organizations, businesses in the private sector, colleges and universities, and the media to promote, through National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month, awareness of sexual violence and strategies to decrease the incidence of sexual assault; and

(3) the House of Representatives supports the goals and ideals of National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

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