

April 2, 2012

TO: All Members of the House of Representatives

FROM: Representative Maria P. Donatucci

SUBJECT: Co-sponsorship of a Resolution Observing April 2012 as “Sexual Assault Awareness Month” in Pennsylvania

In the near future, I will introduce a resolution recognizing the month of April 2012 as “Sexual Assault Awareness Month” in Pennsylvania.

Each year groups such as Women Organized Against Rape (WOAR) in Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) observe April as “Sexual Assault Awareness Month” to draw attention to the fact that sexual violence is widespread and has public health implications for every resident in Pennsylvania. These groups and many others work together so all residents can learn what can occur and how to prevent sexual assault and how they can support survivors and the groups that assist them.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has identified sexual violence as an urgent and costly public health crisis; and The American Medical Association has stated that sexual violence serves as a silent, violent epidemic that grows at alarming rates and traumatizes women, men and children of this nation. Additionally, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other law enforcement agencies nationwide indicate sexual violence as the most underreported crime. Only an average of 31% of rape and sexual assault incidents get reported to police.

Doing a resolution on “Sexual Assault Awareness Month” will serve as a method to inform the public of the ongoing and lasting effects of this terrible crime and how we as a Commonwealth can stop it and assist those victimized by it. Additionally, the resolution recognizes the work of groups such as WOAR and PCAR for their efforts to stop and prevent sexual violence and abuse in all their forms and to assist the survivors of such incidents.

If you wish to co-sponsor this resolution, please contact Marilyn Antes at (717) 783-8634 or at mantes@pahouse.net.