



# Solano County

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## Legislation Text

**File #:** 17-261, **Version:** 1

Adopt and present a resolution recognizing the month of April 2017 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Solano County (Supervisor Thomson)

Published Notice Required? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No   X    
Public Hearing Required? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No   X  

### **DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:**

The Solano County District Attorney's Office recommends that the Board adopt and present a resolution recognizing the month of April 2017 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Solano County.

### **SUMMARY:**

In 2003, President Bush signed Public Law No. 108-38 declaring April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. This month is set aside each year to promote public awareness of sexual violence, including strategies to decrease the incidence of sexual assault, to let victims who have been sexually assaulted know that they are not alone and educate them about available services. Additionally, Sexual Assault Awareness Month is intended to increase support for agencies that provide sexual assault services. The Department recognizes the need to raise public awareness about sexual violence and to encourage both the prevention of sexual assault and the prosecution of its perpetrators. In addition, it is appropriate to salute the more than 20 million victims who have survived sexual assault in the United States and the efforts of victims, their families, volunteers, and professionals who combat sexual assault. It is intended that all efforts to promote public awareness of sexual assault and the many dedicated individuals working to respond to sexual assault and to repair the lives of those affected, are honored by the adoption of this resolution.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The costs associated with this item are included within the Department's FY2016/17 Adopted Budget. There is no additional impact to the County General Fund.

### **DISCUSSION:**

SafeQuest Solano is one of 84 Rape Crisis Centers funded in part by California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES). The purpose of CalOES's Rape Crisis Program is to reduce the level of trauma experienced by sexual assault survivors. The coordination, integration and assistance of the post-rape experience is extremely important in helping survivors through the healing process.

The role of the Rape Crisis Center Advocate is to provide continuity of care from the first contact to case closure and after case disposition. These vital and trauma informed services (peer counseling, supportive accompaniment services, information about medical and forensic procedures and community resources) are provided 24 hours, 7 days a week. SafeQuest Solano's mission is to help survivors heal and reclaim personal strength, whether or not they choose to participate in the criminal process or whether the case moves on to the criminal justice system. It is important to note that these services are delivered to survivors who may choose not to report the crime.

SafeQuest Solano's role in the SART (Sexual Assault Response Team) is to provide leadership advocating for the needs and rights of survivors at the systems and individual level. In addition they actively participate in solving systems issues, team education, strategic planning and community relations related to the SART.

In the 2015 to 2016 reporting period, SafeQuest Solano provided crisis intervention services to 339 survivors, accompanied 84 rape victims at their SANE-SART exams, and delivered in-person individual counseling services to 176 people. '

Every April, SafeQuest Solano recognizes Sexual Assault Awareness Month through multiple activities. This year, on April 26, 2017, SafeQuest Solano will join a worldwide movement in recognizing Denim Day:

- It is crucially important to hold perpetrators responsible for sexual attacks, and to prevent sexual violence at every opportunity. In 1998, the Italian Supreme Court overturned the conviction of a man who sexually assaulted an 18-year-old woman after the court determined that, "because the victim wore very, very tight jeans, she had to help him remove them, and by removing the jeans it was no longer rape but consensual sex." Enraged by the court decision, within a matter of hours, the women in the Italian Parliament launched into immediate action and protested by wearing jeans to work. Nations and states throughout the world have followed the lead of the Italian Parliament by designating their own "Denim Day" to raise public awareness about rape and sexual assault.

SafeQuest Solano will recognize April 26, 2017 as Denim Day and encourages everyone to wear jeans on that day to help communicate the message that there is no excuse for and never an invitation to commit rape.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

The Board may choose not to adopt and present the resolution. This is not recommended because this is an opportunity to raise awareness and promote community discussion regarding sexual assault and available resources.

#### **OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

SafeQuest Solano and the Solano Family Justice Center collaborated with the District Attorney's Office to support and coordinate Sexual Assault Awareness Month activities. The County Administrator's Office has reviewed this report and concurs with the Department's recommendations.

#### **CAO RECOMMENDATION:**

**APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION**