

BY: Senator KENNEDY

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing Governor
Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim April 2017 as Sexual
Assault Awareness Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to commemorate and increase awareness of issues that are of significance for the citizens of this great Nation and Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim April 2017 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Sexual Assault Awareness Month; and

WHEREAS, On April 1, 2001, the United States first observed Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) nationally; starting in 2005, the National Sexual Violence Resource Center shifted focus to prevention of sexual assault with the campaign "Build healthy, respectful relationships"; and

WHEREAS, Every year since its inception, SAAM has focused their campaigns on different aspects of sexual violence, utilizing nationwide organization, regional resources and a toolkit to promote awareness, preventative measures, and education; and

WHEREAS, In 1987, the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NYSCASA) was formed by rape crisis advocates as a mutual support group, with the goals of creating a collective voice for sexual assault victims, to promote change in public policy and legislation to benefit survivors of sexual assault, to increase prevention programming, to advocate for the needs of all sexual assault survivors, to develop a networking alliance among all organizations concerned about sexual assault, and to confront societal denial of the impact of sexual violence by providing information and resources to the public; and

WHEREAS, Through the years, NYSCASA's mission and purpose rapidly evolved to include technical assistance, resource development and policy advocacy for more than 100 Rape Crisis programs, sister agencies and collaborators statewide which work with survivors of sexual violence and their families; and

WHEREAS, Today, NYSCASA partners with local, regional, state and national organizations which are dedicated to ending sexual violence; and

WHEREAS, Sexual assault and sexual harassment harm our communities, with statistics showing that every 98 seconds, an American is sexually assaulted; one in six women and one in 71 men will survive a sexual assault in their lifetimes; and

WHEREAS, Child sexual abuse prevention must be a priority to confront the reality that one in six boys and one in four girls will experience a sexual assault before the age of 18; 60,000 children were victims of sexual abuse in 2016; and

WHEREAS, Young people experience heightened rates of sexual violence and youth ages 12 to 17 were two-and-a-half times more likely to be victims of rape or sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, On college campuses, one in five women and one in 16 men are sexually assaulted during their time in college; and

WHEREAS, We must work together to educate our communities about sexual violence prevention, supporting survivors and speaking out against harmful attitudes and actions which condone sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, When we actively get involved we can prevent sexual violence by increasing education, awareness and community involvement; and

WHEREAS, It is time to create a safer environment in the workplace, the community and the world for all; and

WHEREAS, In 2016, the WNY Crisis Services Center answered 80,002 crisis calls, conducted 2,580 outreach mental health visits, provided 5,714 people with education/training, and responded to 1,214 domestic/sexual violence hospital cases; and

WHEREAS, April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month and each day of the year is an opportunity to create change for the future; and

WHEREAS, Sexual assault is a horrific act of crime which deserves the attention of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim April 2017 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Sexual Assault Awareness Month; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, and to the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault.