



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, sexual assault is a despicable crime that affects victims, families and our entire society – tragically, crimes that are sexually violent in nature continue to rank among the most prevalent in our society, and furthermore they create some of the most widespread public health problems in our communities; and

Whereas, sexually violent crimes such as rape and assault can result in severe physical and traumatic psychological problems, both immediate and long-term, and can become a burden for survivors and society in general, whereby victims of sexual violence may experience a variety of continuing physical and psychological problems such as post traumatic stress disorder, eating disorders, substance abuse, depression, anxiety, low self esteem and suicide; and

Whereas, in New York State, effective programs and policies address the issue of sexual violence prevention and our State is furthermore committed to providing quality services to sexual assault survivors in order to help them overcome the enormous trauma of an attack and ensure successful prosecution of perpetrators; and

Whereas, the New York State Department of Health supports a Rape Crisis Center in every county of the state that provides important services such as 24-hour hotlines, advocacy, accompaniment, crisis intervention and more to victims of sexual violence and their family members, and these Rape Crisis Centers also provide primary prevention educational programs in their communities to work towards changing community norms that allow sexual violence to occur; and

Whereas, the New York State Department of Health-certified Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner (SAFE) 24-hour Center of Excellence hospitals and certified SAFE examiners provide competent, compassionate and prompt care to survivors of sexual assault so as to help survivors overcome the impact of the attack and increase conviction rates of perpetrators; and

Whereas, New York State recognizes the important work of certified SAFE hospitals and statewide Rape Crisis Centers, as well as the services provided to victims of sexual violence by state and local organizations, and education, public awareness and public policy initiatives achieved through the dedicated efforts of professional staff and caring volunteers; and

Whereas, every person in New York State has the right to live free from unwanted, non-consensual sexual contact and our children especially must be protected from all sexual violence, and by taking a firm stand against crimes of sexual assault and sexual violence, New York State will have continued success in creating social change by eliminating from our society those elements which threaten the safety and welfare of our children and families, as such staunch advocacy has enabled this State to achieve dramatic reductions in every category of crime, resulting in safer communities for all New Yorkers;

Now, Therefore, I, David A. Paterson, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim April 2010 as

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

in the Empire State.



G i v e n under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State
at the Capitol in the City of Albany this twenty-sixth
day of March in the year two thousand ten.

David A. Paterson

Governor

Lawrence Schwartz
Secretary to the Governor