

---

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

---

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 277 Session of  
2024

---

INTRODUCED BY MUTH, L. WILLIAMS, SCHWANK, HUGHES, TARTAGLIONE,  
HAYWOOD, KANE, FONTANA, BREWSTER, VOGEL, COSTA AND  
CAPPELLETTI, MAY 17, 2024

---

REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, MAY 17, 2024

---

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of April 2024 as "Military Sexual Trauma  
2 Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, April is nationally recognized as "Sexual Assault  
4 Awareness Month" to call attention to the fact that sexual  
5 violence is widespread and impacts every community; and

6 WHEREAS, As part of April being recognized nationally as  
7 "Sexual Assault Awareness Month," this Commonwealth must also  
8 raise awareness of military sexual trauma and the resources  
9 available through the Department of Military and Veterans  
10 Affairs and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs for  
11 survivors of military sexual trauma; and

12 WHEREAS, According to statistics from the United States  
13 Department of Veterans Affairs, 1 in 3 women and 1 in 50 men  
14 report experiencing sexual harassment or sexual assault during  
15 military service when asked by a VA health care provider; and

16 WHEREAS, Any individual in the military can experience  
17 military sexual assault, regardless of the individual's age,

1 race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities  
2 or branch of service; and

3 WHEREAS, Military sexual trauma can occur at any time or  
4 place during military service, whether on or off duty and on or  
5 off base; and

6 WHEREAS, The psychological impact of military sexual trauma  
7 and the resulting trauma can push survivors out of military  
8 service and lead to tremendous difficulty readjusting to their  
9 civilian lives; and

10 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Defense's 2021  
11 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military revealed in  
12 stark detail that sexual assault and sexual harassment remain  
13 persistent and distressing problems in the military; and

14 WHEREAS, Service member sexual assault reports increased by  
15 13% in 2021, compared to the 2020 report; and

16 WHEREAS, Shame and stigma create a barrier to reporting  
17 sexual assault; and

18 WHEREAS, On average, only one out of every three sexual  
19 assault survivors come forward to report the assault; and

20 WHEREAS, Even though women make up only 20% of the United  
21 States Armed Forces members, they are the target of 63% of  
22 sexual assaults; and

23 WHEREAS, Sexual assault in the military is not only a women's  
24 issue; and

25 WHEREAS, More than 100,000 men have been sexually assaulted  
26 in the military in recent decades; and

27 WHEREAS, In today's military, military sexual assault  
28 survivors are often forgotten; and

29 WHEREAS, Prior to being assaulted, many military sexual  
30 assault survivors had dreams of serving for 20 or more years in

1 the United States Armed Forces and were happy in their  
2 workplace; and

3 WHEREAS, Survivors of military sexual assault often decide  
4 not to report the assault for the reasons of embarrassment, fear  
5 and shame and professional and personal implications; and

6 WHEREAS, The military's culture of duty, teamwork, strength  
7 and accomplishment conflicts with military sexual assault  
8 survivors' needs, resulting in them being stigmatized as weak or  
9 failing their fellow service members; and

10 WHEREAS, The uniqueness of military life causes additional  
11 anxiety to a sexual assault survivor and complicates the  
12 survivor's life, which may result in lack of promotion or  
13 removal from service; and

14 WHEREAS, The personal stories of survivors underscore the  
15 need for meaningful change to provide healing to those affected  
16 by military sexual assault trauma through adequate medical and  
17 mental health services; and

18 WHEREAS, The Senate must honor the strength, resolve and  
19 perseverance of military sexual assault survivors and work  
20 urgently to end sexual violence in the military throughout this  
21 Commonwealth; therefore be it

22 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the month of April 2024  
23 as "Military Sexual Trauma Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.