

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 698

Recognizing April 29, 2026, as “Denim Day” and honoring survivors of sexual assault.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 29, 2026

Ms. BALDWIN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Recognizing April 29, 2026, as “Denim Day” and honoring survivors of sexual assault.

Whereas sexual assault affects individuals of every age, race, gender, socioeconomic background, and community across the United States;

Whereas Denim Day began following a 1998 decision by the Italian Supreme Court that overturned a rape conviction based on the victim’s clothing, prompting widespread outrage and a call to action;

Whereas, in response, members of the California Senate wore denim on the steps of the capital in solidarity with the survivor and to protest misconceptions surrounding sexual violence;

Whereas Executive Director/CEO of Peace Over Violence Patti Giggans founded Denim Day in 1999;

Whereas Peace Over Violence, a Los Angeles-based sexual and domestic violence, intimate partner stalking, child abuse, and youth violence prevention center has continuously advocated for survivors of such violence since its inception in 1971, providing emergency, intervention, prevention, education, and advocacy services in Los Angeles and the West San Gabriel Valley;

Whereas Denim Day has since grown into a national and international movement led by Peace Over Violence, encouraging communities to make a social statement with their fashion statement and wear denim as a visible means of protest against victim-blaming and harmful myths and lies about sexual assault, occurring annually the last Wednesday of April during Sexual Assault Awareness Month;

Whereas wearing denim on Denim Day is a symbol of solidarity with survivors of sexual assault and serves as a statement that clothing, behavior, or appearance never constitutes consent;

Whereas wearing denim on Denim Day spreads the signature Denim Day message that states there is no excuse and someone's clothing, behavior, or appearance is never an invitation to harass, abuse, assault, or rape;

Whereas Denim Day is a call to action for survivors to be heard, respected, and have access to trauma-informed services, healing, and justice;

Whereas, in the United States, over half of women and almost 1 in 3 men have experienced sexual violence involving physical contact during their lifetime;

Whereas more than 4 in 5 female rape survivors reported that they were first raped before age 25, and almost half were first raped as a minor;

Whereas recent estimates put the lifetime cost of rape at \$122,461 per survivor, including medical costs, lost productivity, criminal justice activities, and other costs;

Whereas, every 68 seconds somewhere in the United States, someone is sexually assaulted, and every 9 minutes that victim is a child;

Whereas nearly 1 in 10 women has been raped by an intimate partner;

Whereas 6 out of 10 rapes are committed by someone who knew the victim;

Whereas 82 percent of sexual assaults committed by a friend or acquaintance are not reported to the police;

Whereas only 25 out of every 1,000 perpetrators will end up in prison;

Whereas 1 in 5 women are sexually assaulted while in college;

Whereas 15,000 to 19,000 people with developmental disabilities are raped each year in the United States;

Whereas 1 out of 10 rape victims are men;

Whereas 44 percent of sexual assault and rape victims are under the age of 18;

Whereas victims of sexual assault are 3 times more likely to suffer from depression, 6 times more likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, 13 times more likely to abuse alcohol, 26 times more likely to abuse drugs, and 4 times more likely to contemplate suicide;

Whereas 47 percent of transgender people are sexually assaulted at some point in their life;

Whereas sexual violence affects Black women at disproportionately high rates;

Whereas more than 20 percent of Black women are raped during their lifetimes, a higher share than among women overall, which is 18 percent;

Whereas 56.1 percent and over 1,500,000 American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced sexual violence;

Whereas it is essential to raise awareness about sexual violence in all its forms, promote prevention efforts, support survivor-centered policies, and foster a culture of respect, dignity, and accountability; and

Whereas recognizing Denim Day provides an opportunity to reaffirm Congress's commitment to supporting survivors, holding offenders accountable, and advancing education and resources to prevent sexual violence: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes April 29, 2026, as “Denim Day”

3 and supports the goals and ideals of Denim Day to

4 raise awareness of sexual assault and combat victim-

5 blaming;

6 (2) honors the strength, resilience, and courage

7 of survivors of sexual assault and affirms the right

8 of all individuals to live free from violence, harass-

9 ment, and abuse;

1 (3) expresses solidarity with survivors and their
2 families, and supports their access to comprehensive,
3 trauma-informed, culturally competent services, in-
4 cluding medical care, mental health support, legal
5 assistance, and advocacy;

6 (4) reaffirms that clothing, appearance, or be-
7 havior never constitute consent and condemns all
8 forms of victim-blaming;

9 (5) supports efforts to improve the reporting,
10 investigation, and prosecution of sexual assault cases
11 while ensuring survivor-centered and trauma-in-
12 formed approaches throughout the justice process;

13 (6) recognizes the importance of addressing dis-
14 parities in sexual violence affecting marginalized and
15 vulnerable populations, including teenagers, children,
16 women of color, Indigenous communities, individuals
17 with disabilities, and LGBTQIA2+ individuals;

18 (7) calls on Federal, State, local, Tribal, and
19 territorial governments to strengthen policies, fund-
20 ing, and programs that prevent sexual violence and
21 support survivors; and

22 (8) urges continued collaboration among policy-
23 makers, advocacy organizations, law enforcement,

- 1 and communities to end sexual violence and ensure
- 2 accountability for perpetrators.

