

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 72

BY SENATOR GATTI

A RESOLUTION

To declare Wednesday, April 4, 2018, as Start by Believing Day.

WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana shares a critical concern for victims of sexual violence and a desire to support their needs for justice and healing; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, Sexual Trauma Awareness & Response®, or better known as STAR®, served the needs of 300 victims by providing individual and group counseling sessions, 655 victims by providing accompaniment to hospital exams, law enforcement interviews, or other proceedings, and 150 victims by providing legal representation services; and

WHEREAS, current estimates suggest no more than twenty percent of sexual assaults will be reported to law enforcement and less than three percent will result in the conviction and incarceration of the perpetrator; and

WHEREAS, research documents that victims are far more likely to disclose their sexual assault to a friend or family member, and when these loved ones respond with doubt, shame, or blame, victims suffer additional negative effects on their physical and psychological well-being; and

WHEREAS, the Start by Believing public awareness campaign, a program of End Violence Against Women International, is designed to improve the responses of friends, family members, and community professionals, so they can help victims to access supportive resources and engage the criminal justice system.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby declare Wednesday, April 4, 2018, as Start by Believing Day and does hereby express support of the Start by Believing public awareness campaign.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE