



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Sexual Assault Awareness Month and the observance of Denim Day are intended to draw attention to the fact that sexual violence is widespread and has public health implications for every community member of Middlesex County, including lifelong mental health impact; and

WHEREAS, sexual assault, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment greatly impact our community, as statistics indicate 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused before age 18, with many more experiencing other types of sexual violence in their adult lives; and

WHEREAS, prevention is possible, so we must work together to educate our community about what can be done to stop sexual violence while supporting survivors; and

WHEREAS, staff and volunteers of anti-violence and prevention programs in Middlesex County, including the Middlesex County Center for Empowerment and Sexual Violence Prevention Coalition, encourage every person to speak out when witnessing acts of violence, however small, and to challenge the social norms that continue to perpetuate a culture of violence; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Sex Crimes Officers Association and the Middlesex County Sex Crimes Liaison Officers, in connection with the Middlesex County Prosecutor's Office, are dedicated to ensuring the effective investigation and prosecution of sex crimes in our community through interagency collaboration and training; and

WHEREAS, with leadership, dedication, and encouragement, there is compelling evidence that we can be successful in reducing sexual violence in Middlesex County through increased awareness, prevention education focused on increasing gender equity, healthy relationships, and bystander intervention; and holding perpetrators who commit acts of violence responsible for their actions; and

WHEREAS, throughout the month of April, Middlesex County strongly supports the efforts of national, state, and local partners, and of every citizen to actively engage in public and private efforts, including conversations about what sexual violence is, how to prevent it, how to help survivors connect with services, and how every segment of our society can work together to better address sexual violence.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Ed Seely, Mayor of the Borough of Spotswood, together with our Governing Body, do hereby proclaim April 2017 as **SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH**, and join anti-sexual violence advocates and support service programs in the belief that all community members must be part of the solution to end sexual violence, and encourage the observation of Denim Day on Wednesday, April 26, 2017.

DATED: April 3, 2017