

*February 3, 2009*

**Mr. SCOTT of Virginia:** Madam Speaker, House Resolution 103 designates this week, February 2 through February 6, as National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week. It is designed to bring public attention to the problem of teen dating violence, and the need for more effective prevention and deterrence.

According to the recent report by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, approximately one in three adolescent girls in the United States becomes a victim of emotional, verbal, or physical abuse from a dating partner. This alarming statistic far exceeds rates at which other types of violence are affecting youth in this country.

The study also find that girls exposed to dating violence are more likely to be subjected to other forms of violence. These victims are also more likely to engage in unsafe sexual activity, to have a higher incidence of substance abuse, and to have thought about or attempted suicide, than boys or girls that have not been abused.

The study revealed that most victims of dating violence are subject to multiple acts of violence and aggressive behavior, which increases in frequency and intensity. For example, 63 percent of young people who reported having been slapped, hit, or kicked by their partner indicated that the abuse occurred on two or more occasions.

Teenage girls are more likely than adult women to be victims of dating violence, and are more likely to be injured as a result of that violence.

With deaths and injuries resulting from teen dating violence on the increase, we must recognize this type of behavior as a crime as well as a serious public health concern. We must ensure that our young people are made aware of the seriousness of these offenses. And ensure that our laws provide an effective deterrent.

Today's resolution should encourage families and communities around the country to educate their young people about this problem, and to seek their help in preventing it. I'd like to commend the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. *Lewis*) for his leadership in introducing this resolution. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the resolution.