

.....
(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. _____

Expressing support for designating the week of November 4 through
November 10, 2024, as “Forensic Nursing Week”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. Ross submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for designating the week of November
4 through November 10, 2024, as “Forensic Nursing Week”.

Whereas forensic nurses are registered or advanced practice
nurses who—

(1) have received specialized education and training
to address the acute and long-term health consequences
of patients seeking medical care after being impacted by
violence; and

(2) have specific expertise in the comprehensive
medical forensic examination (MFE) and treatment of
patients who have experienced sexual assault, intimate
partner violence, child and elder maltreatment, human

trafficking, and accidental as well as nonaccidental trauma;

Whereas forensic nurses are often the first health care professionals to provide medical care to a victim of sexual violence and routinely coordinate the resources necessary for followup needs, including those involving law enforcement reporting;

Whereas patients impacted by violence, exploitation, trauma, and abuse—

(1) experience acute and long-term health consequences associated with that victimization; and

(2) are more likely to experience depression, substance use, posttraumatic stress disorder, and other chronic conditions than the general population;

Whereas early health care intervention immediately following acts of violence can lead to better long-term patient outcomes as well as lower overall medical system costs;

Whereas it is imperative that victims of sexual or intimate partner violence are guaranteed, through the Violence Against Women Act, access to comprehensive medical forensic examinations, which are specialized health care interventions that fully and promptly address the medical needs of patients experiencing physical harm;

Whereas only approximately 25 percent of United States hospitals have Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) on staff, demonstrating an emergency need to implement new programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022 to increase patient access to SANEs;

Whereas the Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women has published an updated National Pro-

tocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations: Adults/Adolescents and a new National Protocol for Intimate Partner Violence Medical Forensic Examinations, two critical resources that recognize health care providers' pivotal role in enhancing public safety and facilitating survivor healing after acts of violence;

Whereas forensic nurses are essential to America's response to violence because they provide trauma-informed nursing care across the lifespan and in diverse practice settings; and

Whereas forensic nursing has been formally recognized as a specialty practice area since 1995: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) expresses support for the designation of
3 “Forensic Nursing Week”;

4 (2) acknowledges the commitment and vital
5 contributions of forensic nurses to patient treatment
6 and healing in the aftermath of violence; and

7 (3) encourages policies and actions to protect
8 communities from violence and support health care
9 responses to sexual and physical assault.