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**Nevada Coalition
Against Sexual
Violence**

Press Release

Nevada First Lady Encourages all to Participate in Sexual Assault Awareness Month Event

Las Vegas, Nevada, April 22, 2011: Kathleen Sandoval, the first Lady of the State of Nevada, is encouraging all Nevada residents to participate in “Denim Day” on April 27, 2011. “Denim Day” resulted from the mishandling of the 1992 rape of an 18-year-old in Italy. She was picked up by her driving instructor to begin a driving lesson, and she was raped by him on the side of the road. She pressed charges. The perpetrator was convicted. The instructor appealed the case to the Italian High Court and in 1999, the court overturned the conviction with a member of the High Court declaring that since the victim wore very tight jeans, the instructor could not have removed them himself. It was therefore surmised that the victim must have willingly participated. Women of the Italian legislature protested this decision by wearing jeans. As news of the decision spread, so did the protest. In April 1999 the state of California established the first Denim Day in the United States.

“By joining together to wear jeans on ‘Denim Day’ we are letting survivors know we do not blame them for their victimization, and that we stand with them in holding perpetrators accountable,” said Andrea Sundberg, Executive Director, Nevada Coalition against Sexual Violence. Sundberg encourages everybody to wear denim on April 27th in honor of all survivors. This also provides a unique opportunity to raise funds by having staff pay to wear denim, donating the proceeds to local services providers, or provide staff with information on sexual assault.

According to government reports, sexual assaults are the lowest reported violent crime with only a small percentage of brave survivors stepping forward to report their assault and participate in the criminal justice process. Rape crisis centers, advocates, and volunteers are asked to do more for victims during a time when the state and federal governments are assisting less. For these reasons, we ask Nevadans to stand unified with those individuals who step forward in the aftermath of violence.

For more information please contact Andrea Sundberg director@ncasv.org or (702) 990-3460.

For Release