

SR-38, As Adopted by Senate, April 18, 2013

Senator Schuitmaker offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 38.

A resolution to commemorate April 21-27, 2013, as Crime Victims' Rights Week and reaffirm our commitment to the annual Crime Victims Vigil on April 24, 2013.

Whereas, With the implementation of the crime victim's rights act in 1985 and the passage of the constitutional amendment in 1988, the state of Michigan has adopted some of the nation's most comprehensive laws to protect the rights of crime victims. According to the constitutional amendment, crime victims possess the right to be treated with fairness and respect for their dignity and privacy throughout the criminal justice process. All of us must do what we can to adhere not only to the crime victim's rights laws, but to the spirit of those laws as well. Let us acknowledge that just as government must be open to its citizens, so our system of justice must be open to victims of crime; and

Whereas, Though the state of Michigan continues to make strides in reducing the crime rate, there are still far too many victims of crime. Michigan families reported over five hundred thousand new victims of crime in 2010 alone, and research consistently indicates that less than half of all crimes are reported. The most recent National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey results have estimated that today in Michigan there are over one million survivors of sexual assault. Across the nation, one in three women and one in ten men are identified as survivors of partner and sexual violence. The literally millions of Michigan citizens who have suffered a violation of their person, property, or trust deserve to be treated with dignity and respect by our criminal and juvenile justice systems and by society at-large; and

Whereas, We recognize that our response to crime victims plays an important role in the efforts to rebuild their lives following the offense. Let all of us--policymakers, those in the criminal justice system, counselors, clergy members, and members of the general public--do what we can to respond to victims of crime with compassion and respect; and

Whereas, The national theme for 2013 is "New Challenges, New Solutions." Let us all strive toward these rights and beyond until we create a world where crime decreases, victimization is reduced, and every victim experiences their constitutional right to be treated with fairness and with respect for their dignity and privacy; and

Whereas, Through public and private efforts, our community has already taken important steps to ensure that our treatment of victims helps them to begin the healing. We gratefully acknowledge the many law enforcement officers, prosecutors, victims service providers, corrections officers, parole and probation officers, counselors, physicians, health care professionals, and the many others whose dedication and service to crime victims helps to lessen trauma and assists in personal recoveries. Let us, in particular, express our appreciation for those victims and survivors of crime who have turned personal tragedy into a motivating force not only to improve the rights and treatment of other victims of crime, but also to build a better, more just community; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we hereby commemorate the week of April 21-27, 2013, as Crime Victims' Rights Week and reaffirm our commitment to respect and enforce victims' rights and address their needs with a Crime Victims Vigil on April 24, 2013, at the State Capitol, and throughout the remainder of the year.