

SR-99, As Adopted by Senate, October 24, 2013

Senator Caswell offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 99.

A resolution to declare October 2013 as Juvenile Justice Awareness Month in the state of Michigan.

Whereas, The historical role of the juvenile court system is to rehabilitate and treat young offenders while holding them accountable and maintaining public safety. It is, therefore, acknowledged that keeping youth within their families, homes, and communities is best practice; and

Whereas, Recent research indicates that youth are developmentally different from adults; and

Whereas, Most laws allowing the prosecution of youth as adults were enacted prior to evidence produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention that demonstrate about 70-80 percent of youth treated in a punitive, nontherapeutic program will reoffend; and

Whereas, It is estimated that over 70 percent of children in the juvenile justice system have a diagnosable mental health condition, of which 30 percent have a serious emotional disturbance; and

Whereas, Youth detained or involved in the juvenile justice system should be kept in the least restrictive setting possible, with family inclusion and services provided to aid in treatment, while providing public safety; and

Whereas, 200,000 youth are tried, sentenced, or incarcerated as adults every year in the United States, and most of the youth are prosecuted for nonviolent offenses; and

Whereas, Youth with criminal records are generally barred from further education, employment, or other collateral consequences normally applied in the adult justice system; and

Whereas, Moving a youth from the adult criminal justice system into community-based services or to the juvenile justice system is more appropriate; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That the members of this legislative body declare October 2013 as Juvenile Justice Awareness Month in the state of Michigan; and be it further

Resolved, That we express our support for the leadership of the Michigan Council on Crime and Delinquency, Association for Children's Mental Health, Citizens for Prison Reform and state agencies, quality improvement partners, and consumer advocates. We commend their work toward the examination of laws, policies, and practices that focus on reducing the number of youth in the juvenile justice system; removing young offenders when possible from out-of-home placements, detention centers, and adult jails and prisons; ensuring youth sentences account for the scientifically-based developmental differences from adults; and enabling youth to return to their families and society without compromising community safety.