

Rep. Garrett offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 177.

A resolution to memorialize the U.S. Congress to enact legislation preventing federal agencies from putting Social Security numbers in their entirety on written correspondence and requiring alternative verification methods to protect consumers from identity theft.

Whereas, A Social Security number is an important identifier issued to citizens, permanent residents, and temporary working residents in the United States. An individual's Social Security number is associated with tracking Social Security-related accounts and benefits. It also may be used in conjunction with other personal, sensitive material, such as tax and financial information. This number essentially acts as a person's national identification number; and

Whereas, The crime of identity theft presents an increasing concern to people across the country. Identity theft and identity fraud involve the wrongful acquisition and use of another person's identity, usually for financial gain. In 2012, of those 16 and older, there were estimated to be 16.6 million victims of identity theft, according to the federal Bureau of Justice Statistics. This number amounts to 7 percent of all persons in that grouping. Further, the economic losses attributed to these cases of identity theft totaled \$24.7 billion—an amount determined to be more than \$10 billion greater than losses from the entirety of all other property crimes assessed in the National Crime Victimization Survey; and

Whereas, Due to privacy concerns and the large and growing problem of identity theft, it is important that personal information be securely conveyed. With their importance and increasing use in private matters, like financial transactions, it is vital to keep Social Security numbers secure. This is especially true for written documents that contain a Social Security number since they may be viewed or intercepted by numerous parties before reaching the intended recipient; and

Whereas, There are alternatives to using Social Security numbers for verification purposes. Personal identification numbers (PIN), passwords, or other security devices can take the place of Social Security numbers on federal correspondence. For instance, the U.S. Department of Education allows users to create an FSA ID to access Federal Student Aid's online systems; and

Whereas, Michigan has already moved to protect Social Security numbers from theft. Under the Michigan Social Security Privacy Act (2004 PA 454), various prohibitions on the use of an employee, student, or other individual's Social Security numbers are in place. These include certain prohibitions on mailings that contain a Social Security number. Except for certain exceptions, it is prohibited to include all or more than four sequential digits of a Social Security number in a document or information mailed to a person; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the U.S. Congress to enact legislation preventing federal agencies from putting Social Security numbers in their entirety on written correspondence and requiring alternative verification methods to protect consumers from identity theft; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.