

Senator Schuitmaker offered the following resolution:

**Senate Resolution No. 39.**

A resolution to commemorate the week of April 19–25, 2015, as Crime Victims’ Rights Week in the state of Michigan.

Whereas, With the implementation of the Crime Victim’s Rights Act in 1985 and the passage of a 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; and

Whereas, 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 Michigan continues to make strides in reducing the crime rate, there are still far too many victims of crime. Michigan families reported thousands of new victims of crime last year, and research consistently indicates that less than half of all crimes are reported. The most recent National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey results estimated that today in Michigan, there are over 1 million survivors of sexual assault; and

Whereas, 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, The national theme for 2015 is “Engaging Communities. Empowering Victims.” The entire community has a role to play in preventing crime and offering support; and

Whereas, Involving survivors helps victim service providers and criminal justice professionals understand the culture, values, and expectations of under- and unserved victims who seek assistance and justice; and

Whereas, Engaging victims’ communities and learning from leaders about their unique needs helps service providers foster a supportive atmosphere in which victims seek help and healing; and

Whereas, Incorporating communities’ existing experts and trusted sources of support into efforts to fully serve survivors will develop a criminal justice system response that is truly accessible and appropriate for all victims of crime; and

Whereas, Victims know best how to direct and manage their own lives, and true recovery from crime will incorporate a victim’s cultural, religious, economic, social, and personal interests; and

Whereas, With the full weight of their community and victim service providers behind them, survivors will feel empowered to face their grief, loss, fear, anger, and shame without fear of judgment and will feel understood and worthy of support; and

Whereas, National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 19-25, 2015, is an opportune time to commit to ensuring that all victims of crime are offered accessible and appropriate services in the aftermath of crime; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we hereby commemorate the week of April 19-25, 2015, as Crime Victims' Rights Week in the state of Michigan and reaffirm this state's commitment to protecting the rights of crime victims; and be it further

Resolved, That we express our sincere gratitude and appreciation for those community members, victim service providers, and criminal justice professionals who are committed to improving our response to all victims of crime so that they may find relevant assistance, support, justice, and peace.