

Senator Schuitmaker offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 161.

A resolution to commemorate the week of April 10-16, 2016, as Crime Victims' Rights Week.

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 have estimated that today in Michigan, there are over 1 million survivors of sexual assault; and

Whereas, The 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 2016 is "Serving Victims, Building Trust, Restoring Hope." Let us focus on the importance of early intervention and victim services in establishing trust with victims, which, in turn, begins to restore their hope for healing and recovery; and

Whereas, The victim services community has worked diligently for decades to create an environment for victims that is safe, supportive, and effective; and

Whereas, Intervening early with services that support and empower victims provides a pathway to recovery from crime and abuse; and

Whereas, Serving victims and rebuilding their trust restores hope to victims and survivors, as well as their communities; and

Whereas, National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 10-16, 2016, 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 10-16, 2016, as Crime Victims' Rights Week in the state of Michigan and express our support of their rights with a vigil on April 13, 2016, at the State Capitol; and be it further

Resolved, That we reaffirm this state's commitment to protecting the rights of crime victims and addressing their needs.