

Reps. Kahle, Brinks, Chang, Chirkun, Clemente, Elder, Ellison, Faris, Geiss, Greig, Hoadley, Hughes, Kesto, Lasinski, Liberati, Maturen, Moss, Rendon, Schor, Sneller, Wittenberg, Yanez and Yaroch offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 84.

A resolution to declare May 4, 2017, as Anti-Bullying Day in the state of Michigan.

Whereas, In 2012, the United Nations, in an effort to raise public awareness and confront the act of bullying in all forms and stand in support of anti-bullying campaigns worldwide, established and declared May 4 as Anti-Bullying Day; and

Whereas, Bullying in schools and beyond school walls has pervaded students' lives and negatively impacted the climate in which they are guaranteed the right to learn freely and without fear, impacting both students who bully and those who are bullied adversely; and

Whereas, All Michigan citizens are in some way affected by this widespread issue and should collaborate to address the problem early and authoritatively; and

Whereas, Bullying, according to the Matt Epling Safe School Law, means any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, including, but not limited to, cyberbullying, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm 1 or more pupils either directly or indirectly. It does one or more of the following: i) Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of 1 or more pupils. (ii) Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school district's or public school's educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress. (iii) Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil's physical or mental health. (iv) Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school; and

Whereas, Whether such bullying behavior is direct or indirect, the physical and psychological intimidation that occurs repeatedly often creates an ongoing pattern of harassment and abuse for the victim; and

Whereas, The far-reaching effects of bullying upon students cause severe, and in some cases, lifelong problems, inciting fear and hopelessness into students' lives and increasing considerations of self-harm and suicide; and

Whereas, Victims of bullying are more likely to avoid attending school, struggle in their schoolwork, and drop out before graduation, often leaving psychological impact that carries into adulthood in the forms of anxiety and depression; and

Whereas, Cyber-bullying has increased rapidly, only enhancing pain and trauma for students, while spreading the reach of bullying into a multitude of social spheres and online mediums; and

Whereas, Victimized children are commonly expected to confront their abusers on their own and often feel that they have no way to defend themselves; and

Whereas, Confrontation and advocacy from authority figures such as parents, teachers, and administrators provides a resource for victims and a safe haven for vulnerability and progress both in squelching the bullying and strengthening the bullied; and

Whereas, Those who engage in bullying behavior are at increased risk for academic problems, substance use, and violent behavior later in adolescence and adulthood; and

Whereas, Every Michigan school district must adopt a local policy prohibiting bullying and harassment at school, according to Public Act 241 of 2011, also known as Matt Epling Safe School Law; and

Whereas, A stand against bullying, informing the general public about the risks and cost of bullying for both the bully and the target, as well as those who witness bullying, should aid in bringing awareness and taking preventative action to affect societal attitudes toward bullying and bullying's prevalence in society; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body declare May 4, 2017, as Anti-Bullying Day in the state of Michigan.