

Reps. Hauck, Maturen, Yaroch, Sheppard, Calley, Canfield, Chirkun, Cox, Crawford, Ellison, Faris, Green, Hoadley, Hornberger, Howrylak, Hughes, Marino, Moss, Schor and Wittenberg offered the following resolution:

**House Resolution No. 31.**

A resolution to declare March 1, 2017 as “Spread The Word To End The Word Day” in the state of Michigan.

Whereas, “Spread the Word to End the Word” is an ongoing campaign, organized by Special Olympics, which asks people to pledge to stop using the “R-word.” Stopping the use of this language is a starting point toward creating more accepting attitudes and communities for all people; and

Whereas, Language affects attitudes and attitudes affect actions and the “R-word” perpetuates a hurtful and damaging stigma, no matter whether it is used carelessly or with specific intent; and

Whereas, The terms “mental retardation” and “mentally retarded” were once medical terms with a specific clinical connotation. The pejorative forms, “retard” and “retarded” have since been become too widely used in today’s society as slang to degrade and insult people with intellectual disabilities; and

Whereas, The pejorative use of the “R-word” only reinforces painful stereotypes of people with intellectual disabilities being less valued members of humanity; and

Whereas, Special Olympics and the greater disability community prefers people-first language in order to focus on people and their gifts and accomplishments and to dispel negative attitudes and stereotypes; and

Whereas, Special Olympics is a global leader in providing continuing opportunities through sports for people with intellectual disabilities to realize their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, and experience joy and friendship. The organization uses sports as a catalyst for building communities of understanding, inclusion, and respect; and Special Olympics believes that when people “Play Unified” they will “Live Unified”; and

Whereas, March 1, 2017 is the annual day of heightened awareness about and active support of the Spread the Word to End the Word efforts; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, that members of this legislative body declare March 1, 2017 as “Spread The Word To End The Word” Day in the state of Michigan. We call upon society to pledge to use respectful, people-first language and proclaim our support and affinity for respectful discourse toward all.