

Rep. Love offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 366.

A resolution to declare June 8, 2018, as Men's Mental Health Awareness Day in the state of Michigan.

Whereas, Men are widely celebrated around the country for their role in providing for and protecting their spouses, children, families, and the nation at large. The image of the stereotypical man, as a hardworking, never complaining, tough guy has been ingrained in the American psyche as a mythical, ideological example that all men should strive for. Society has conditioned men that they are to be an unshakeable bedrock of production, both at work and at home, devoid of emotion. This, however, is far from reality as studies show that men often suffer in silence from mental health issues because of society's lack of empathy and understanding for the psychological challenges that men face; and

Whereas, The lack of social acceptability for men to seek mental health treatment leads them to self-medicate and have significantly higher incidence of alcohol and drug dependency as well as increased suicide rates compared to their female counterparts. Studies show that 20% of men will develop alcohol dependency; and

Whereas, Statistics from the National Health Interview Survey show that 9% of men experience depression or anxiety on a daily basis, a figure that rises to 31% when including men who note that they have suffered from depression at some point in their lifetimes; and

Whereas, Suffering in silence and addiction leads men to have proportionately high suicide rates, accounting for over 75% of suicide victims in the United States. The combination of not having meaningful work, the influence of self-medication with alcohol and drugs, isolation, the stigma of shamefulness that unemployment brings, all combined with the lack of a healthy outlet for therapy, lead men down the road of addiction often called "Slow-Motion Suicide"; and

Whereas, Despite the high incidence of mental health issues facing men, the stigmatization that surrounds men coming forward is expressed in the cultural phrase "Man Up," implying that having psychological challenges are contrary to the picturesque image of men, perpetuated in society. This leads to a fear of ostracization preventing men from seeking help for mental health issues, ultimately compounding them, as men suffer in isolation; and

Whereas, Research indicates that men are significantly mentally affected by divorce and the subsequent separation from their children. According to data from the U.S. Census, only 1 of 6 men retain custody of their children after a divorce and usually only have minimal visitation rights. This has a devastating effect on men as society conditions them to not express emotions such as sadness, even when faced with traumatic life events; and

Whereas, Men's mental health should be recognized as a societal and cultural issue, as much as a health issue so that healthy discussions about the epidemics of substance abuse and suicide among men can be had in a public forum. More male-tailored options and programs for mental health treatment need to be developed and implemented to promote mental and psychological well-being among men. This would positively impact men and society as a whole; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body declare June 8, 2018, as Men's Mental Health Awareness Day in the state of Michigan.