

Senators Schuitmaker and Bieda offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 156.

A resolution to commemorate the week of April 8-14, 2018, 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. This past year has seen a tremendous upheaval with the prosecution of a sports doctor who sexually assaulted his patients and, far more importantly, victims of his criminal course of conduct finally having a voice of their own; and

Whereas, Though Michigan continues to make strides in reducing the crime rate, there are still far too many victims of crime. Research going back 40 years indicates that less than half of violent crimes, and less than 40 percent of property crimes, are reported. The most recent National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey results have estimated that today in Michigan, there are over 1,700,000 survivors of sexual violence; and

Whereas, In the six years from 2011-2016, over 2.6 million people reported being the victim of a crime in Michigan. If it is accurate that less than half of crimes are reported, then Michigan residents have actually been the victims of far more than 5 million crimes in those 6 years; and

Whereas, The national theme for 2018 is "Expand the Circle. Reach All Victims." As we have all seen and heard in the recent sexual assault case, victims need to be believed and services available to assist them in their journey from being a victim to becoming a survivor. 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, In response to the courageous stands and victim impact statements of victims of sexual assault, the Michigan Legislature is working diligently to create a policy and real life 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, National Crime Victims' Rights Week 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 8-14, 2018, as Crime Victims' Rights Week and express our support of their rights with a vigil on April 25, 2018, 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.