

Reps. Bieda, Ball, Booher, Byrnes, Caswell, Clack, Condino, Constan, Cushingberry, Dean, Gillard, Gonzales, Hammel, Hammon, Hansen, Hopgood, Rick Jones, Robert Jones, LeBlanc, Lemmons, Mayes, Melton, Nofs, Proos, Sak, Shaffer, Sheltrown, Spade, Tobocman, Vagnozzi and Valentine offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 71.

A resolution to commemorate the Masons involvement and commitment in the Michigan Child Identification Program.

Whereas, The Masons have been a vital part of American life for over 250 years. The Masons are America's oldest and largest fraternal organization and the Masonic Fraternity is a key part of Michigan's history and heritage; and

Whereas, The First Masonic Lodge, west of the Alleghenies, was organized in Detroit in 1764. The Masonic Fraternal Order of Free and Accepted Masons was formally established in Michigan in 1826; and

Whereas, Lewis Cass, a territorial Governor of Michigan and later its United States Senator, served as a Masonic Grand Master. Over twenty Governors of Michigan have been members of the Masonic Order. In addition, many key Michigan's business, professional, and elected leaders at every level have been proud and active Masons; and

Whereas, There are today nearly 50,000 Michigan Masons in nearly 350 Lodges throughout Michigan. The Masons are deeply committed to community involvement through a wide variety of charitable programs benefiting seniors, widows, orphans, servicemen, and students; and

Whereas, The Masons, as part of their community commitment, have launched the Michigan Child Identification Program (MICHIP) with the goal of helping parents and law enforcement quickly locate missing children. Nearly 800,000 children were reported missing in the United States in 2000 and FBI reports indicate that missing persons reports have increased over 450% since 1982. Masonic volunteers, at sites throughout the state, use the latest computer technology to provide parents with a record of their child's unique characteristics, including tooth prints/dental impressions, a DNA sample, color photos, a laser scan of fingerprints and a brief interview with the child, which is placed on a CD-ROM. All of these materials are given to parents, free of charge, as a complete child identification kit; and

Whereas, If a child is missing, parents can immediately provide this kit to law enforcement to assist them in the child's recovery. Since 2005, more than 25,000 Michigan children have gone through the MICHIP program and the Masons are working to provide access to a far greater number of parents and children. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has called the Masonic-developed CHIP program one of the most complete child identification and recovery programs in the United States; and

Whereas, Michigan Masonic Deputy Grand Master Ira Slaven has worked tirelessly and selflessly with his fellow Masons to make the MICHIP program available throughout the state of Michigan; and

Whereas, On the occasion of his installation as the Masonic Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Michigan in May 2007, Ira Slaven, of Taylor, Michigan, and the Grand Masonic Lodge of Michigan are saluted for their work on behalf of children and parents in Michigan and for the Michigan Masons; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, by the Michigan House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body commemorate the Masons involvement and commitment in the Michigan Child Identification Program.