Reps. Hildenbrand, Gaffney, Accavitti, Booher, Brown, Clack, Condino, Constan, Dean, Farrah, Gonzales, Hammon, Hansen, Robert Jones, Leland, Lemmons, Mayes, Palmer, Palsrok, Pastor, Polidori, Proos, Sak, Shaffer, Sheltrown, Stahl, Tobocman, Vagnozzi and Ward offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 424.

A resolution declaring October 2008 as Michigan Rett Syndrome Awareness Month.

Whereas, Rett Syndrome is a neurological disorder found almost exclusively in girls and considered to be one of the four "female" diseases. Rett Syndrome is caused by a random mutation in the MeCP2 gene found on the X chromosome and is found to affect girls of all nationalities. Rett Syndrome was first described by Dr. Andreas Rett in 1966 but did not get recognition in the United States until 1983. Although improving, it is for this reason that this debilitating disease is absent in the minds of the general public and medical community. Rett Syndrome was thought to affect 1 in 10,000 female births, but many scientists now think it is more prevalent and often misdiagnosed as autism or cerebral palsy; and

Whereas, Children with Rett Syndrome appear to develop normally for the first six to eighteen months after birth, then enter into a rapid degenerative stage of the disease. The child rapidly begins to lose their speech, parents will never again hear the words mommy or daddy from their daughters. Instead the ability to communicate verbally is replaced with the use of their beautiful penetrating eyes. Many children that once were able to crawl or walk find themselves unable to perform these functions . Purposeful hand use is lost as well and replaced with repetitive movements; the girls can no longer feed themselves or even hold onto their favorite toy. Additional symptoms that define the syndrome include; digestive difficulties, breathing abnormalities, severe acid reflux, and loss of appetite, which often results in a feeding tube. Many girls also develop seizures and severe scoliosis. It is a life of pain, frustration, and total dependence; and

Whereas, There are approximately 1-in-15,000 live births in the United States that suffer from Rett Syndrome. And while there is not a known cure for this debilitating disease, there have been tremendous strides made in recent years. For instance, in 1999 the gene MeCP2 was identified as the cause of Rett Syndrome. This discovery has lured many of the most brilliant scientific minds into the field and has brought renewed hope to the families and friends of the afflicted; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body declare October 2008 as Michigan Rett Syndrome Awareness Month. We encourage all Michigan citizens to educate themselves about Rett Syndrome.