

SR-33, As Adopted by Senate, April 12, 2011

Senator Schuitmaker offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 33.

A resolution to commemorate April 10-16, 2011, as Crime Victim's Rights Week and reaffirm our commitment to the Crime Victim's Vigil on April 13, 2011.

Whereas, As the state of Michigan continues to make strides in reducing the crime rate, we must remember that there are still far too many victims of crime. Indeed, the latest available statistics indicate Michigan families had to agonize with over 170,000 reported new victims of violent crime in 2008 alone, and research indicates that only roughly half of violent crimes are reported. Those who have suffered a violation of their person, property, or trust deserve to be treated with dignity and respect by our criminal and juvenile justice systems and by society at-large; and

Whereas, We recognize that our response to crime victims plays an important role in their efforts to rebuild their lives following the offense. Let all of us--policymakers, those in the criminal justice system, counselors, clergy members, and members of the general public--do what we can to respond to victims of crime with compassion and respect; and

Whereas, With the implementation of the crime victim's rights act in 1985 and the passage of the constitutional amendment in 1988, the state of Michigan has adopted some of the nation's most comprehensive laws to protect the rights of victims of crime and provide them certain essential services. All of us must do what we can to adhere not only to the victim's rights laws, but the spirit of those laws as well. Let us acknowledge that just as government must be open to its citizens, so our system of justice must be open to victims of crime; and

Whereas, The national theme for 2011 is based on the provisions in the Michigan Constitution crime victim rights language in Article I, Section 24, granting victims the right to be treated with fairness, dignity, and respect. Let us all strive toward these rights and beyond until we create a world where fairness, dignity, and respect will be basic rights for everyone victimized by crime; and

Whereas, Through public and private efforts, our community has already taken important steps to ensure that our treatment of victims helps them to begin the healing. Let us gratefully acknowledge all those who work, often as volunteers, on behalf of crime victims. Those deserving recognition are the many law enforcement officers, prosecutors, victims service providers, corrections officers, parole and probation officers, counselors, physicians, health care professionals, and the many others whose dedication and service to crime victims helps to lessen trauma and assists in personal recoveries. Let us, in particular, express our appreciation for those victims and survivors of crime who have turned personal tragedy into a motivating force not only to improve the rights and treatment of other victims of crime, but also to build a better, more just community; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we hereby commemorate the week of April 10-16, 2011, as Crime Victim's Rights Week and reaffirm our commitment to respect and enforce victims rights and address their needs with a Crime Victim's Vigil on April 13, 2011, at the State Capitol, and throughout the remainder of the year.