

Reps. Tyler, Barnett, Brown, Constan, Crawford, Darany, Heise, Hooker, Knollenberg, LeBlanc, Liss, Poleski and Slavens offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 95.

A resolution to declare June 5-11, 2011, as Rip Current Awareness Week in the state of Michigan.

Whereas, Summer months bring the excitement of heading to Great Lakes beaches as well as the hidden dangers of rip currents; and

Whereas, Rip currents are a narrow stream of water moving swiftly away from shore, often perpendicular to the shoreline, that extend through the surf zone and past the line of breaking waves; and

Whereas, Rip currents are the greatest surf zone hazard to all beachgoers. They can sweep even the strongest swimmer away from the beach and are particularly dangerous for weak and non-swimmers; and

Whereas, Sixty-four drowning deaths were reported in Lake Michigan during the U.S. Coast Guard's 2010 fiscal year, including at least 17 Great Lakes drowning deaths associated with rip currents; and

Whereas, Drowning is the sixth leading cause of unintentional injury or death for people of all ages, and the second leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 14 years; and

Whereas, Participation in formal swimming lessons can reduce the risk of drowning by 88 percent among children aged 1 to 4 years; and

Whereas, Rip currents can be identified by looking for differences in the water color, water motion, incoming wave shape or breaking point compared to adjacent conditions. Channel of churning, choppy water, an area having a notable difference in water color, line of foam, seaweed, or debris moving steadily away from the beach, or a break in the incoming wave pattern may indicate a rip current; and

Whereas, Swimmers can avoid rip current problems by never swimming alone, swimming near a lifeguard, looking for posted signs and warning flags which may indicate higher than usual hazards, checking with lifeguards before swimming, obeying all instructions provided by lifeguards, and by being cautious. Always assume rip currents are present even if you don't see them; and

Whereas, If caught in a rip current, try to remain calm to conserve energy, don't fight the current, swim across the current in a direction following the shoreline, and when out of the current, swim and angle away from the current and towards shore; and

Whereas, If you cannot escape a rip current try to float or calmly tread water, remember that rip current strength eventually subsides offshore, and draw attention to yourself by facing the shore, waving your arms, and yelling for help; and

Whereas, To assist a swimmer caught in a rip current, get help from a lifeguard or call 9-1-1 and yell instructions on how to escape, then throw the rip current victim something that floats, such as a lifejacket, cooler, or ball, and

Whereas, Many have died trying to help others escape a rip current. Don't become a victim while trying to help someone else. Seek professional help for swimmers caught in a rip current; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body declare June 5-11, 2011, as Rip Currents Awareness Week in the state of Michigan. We recognize and honor the achievements of our Great Lakes lifeguards and encourage swimmers and beachgoers to be cautious and prepared when enjoying Michigan beaches this summer.