

Rep. Stapleton offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 219.

A resolution to declare March 2012 as Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Month in the state of Michigan.

Whereas, HIV/AIDS is increasingly a “women's epidemic”, both in the United States and globally. There are an estimated 25 percent of persons living with HIV in the United States who are women and girls. Women comprise nearly one quarter (23 percent) of persons who are newly infected with HIV. Young women between the ages of 13 and 39 are at extremely high risk of HIV infection and are an increasing percentage of new HIV infections; and

Whereas, Women are more likely to face barriers in accessing HIV prevention, treatment and care because of their lack of control over financial resources, restricted mobility and child care responsibilities. Racial and ethnic disparities are particularly pronounced among women living with HIV/AIDS, with African American and Latina women disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS. Women in the United States with HIV are less likely to receive combination therapy and have less access to treatment than men; and

Whereas, The most common methods of HIV transmission for women are heterosexual contact and injection drug use. Women have a far greater risk of contracting HIV from men during sex than men do from women because of biological determinants; and

Whereas, Women are at a higher risk of experiencing intimate partner violence, including rape, battering, and forced unprotected sex, that puts them at higher risk of becoming infected with HIV. Women whose partners rape or batter them often have limited access to legal remedies, even where laws are on the books to make battering a crime, because of fear or coercion. For many women, negotiating or demanding condom use is a virtual impossibility; and

Whereas, Such factors as poverty, violence, inequality, racial and sexual biases, and discriminatory laws directly contribute to health disparities and an increased vulnerability to HIV for women; and

Whereas, Most Americans feel there has not been enough action on HIV from a variety of groups and institutions including the media, corporate, religious and community leaders, and pharmaceutical companies; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body declare March 2012 as Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Month in the state of Michigan. We encourage all citizens to help educate and support family, friends and neighbors who have been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS through getting tested and use necessary precautions to reduce the spread of the deadly virus; and be it further.

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Michigan Department of Community Health.