

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 1063

Commending Silence Empowers Violence Community Care and Action Teams.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 19, 2019
Agreed to by the Senate, February 23, 2019

WHEREAS, Silence Empowers Violence Community Care and Action Teams is a youth-led program that has made significant strides toward building a stronger community by raising awareness of how not speaking up or not taking action as the victim of a crime or when witnessing a crime gives perpetrators permission, power, and a place to continue detrimental behavior; and

WHEREAS, in December 2017, The Catalyst Effect launched a collaborative, nationwide youth-led awareness to action movement called Silence Empowers Violence...Break the Code!, recognizing that codes of silence, fear of reprisal, desensitization to violence, lack of cooperation with law enforcement, a sense of apathy, and distrust of law enforcement all contribute to an environment where crime and violence can flourish; and

WHEREAS, the movement engages with young people between the ages of 10 and 17 through Silence Empowers Violence Community Care and Action Teams, including teams to address creative expressions, community service, gangs, bullying, suicide, drugs and alcohol, human trafficking, sexual assault, domestic violence, and child abuse; and

WHEREAS, the Silence Empowers Violence Community Care and Action Teams have identified a series of practices that can be incorporated to assist in dealing with the issue of unreported and unresolved crimes, including establishing a comprehensive witness protection and relocation program, implementing community cooperation incentives, and facilitating violence prevention awareness educational training; and

WHEREAS, the Silence Empowers Violence Community Care and Action Teams work diligently to implement these practices and encourage others to implement these practices wherever possible; and

WHEREAS, leaders from Silence Empowers Violence Community Care and Action Teams partnered with the Youth Services Division of the Newport News Department of Human Services and the Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control on an alcohol-free and drug-free community art project; the teams were tasked with facilitating peer-to-peer trainings and designing a positive anti-alcohol and anti-drug message on the hood of a car for display in the community to spread awareness; and

WHEREAS, members of the Silence Empowers Violence Community Care and Action Teams participated in the first Silence Empowers Violence...Break the Code symposium in July 2018 and the Break the Code Walk in October 2018, among many community outreach activities; and

WHEREAS, The Catalyst Effect's stellar accomplishment of successfully launching the Silence Empowers ViolenceBreak the Code movement and creating the Silence Empowers Violence Community Care and Action Teams is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and commitment of all of its team members, staff, volunteers, community partners, and especially the youth participants and their families; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Silence Empowers Violence Community Care and Action Teams for their youth-led community service and violence prevention efforts; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Silence Empowers Violence Community Care and Action Teams as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the team members' work to create significant and lasting change in violence prevention in Newport News and communities across the nation.

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