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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 630

Offered January 9, 2019

Prefiled January 7, 2019

Designating the third full week of September, in 2019 and in each succeeding year, as Silence Empowers Violence Break the Code Awareness-to-Action Week in Virginia.

Patrons—Price, Adams, D.M., Aird, Bagby, Bourne, Brewer, Carr, Davis, Delaney, Filler-Corn, Gilbert, Gooditis, Hayes, Helsel, Heretick, Herring, Hope, James, Jones, J.C., Jones, S.C., Keam, Kory, Levine, Lindsey, Lopez, Miyares, Mullin, Rasoul, Rodman, Simon, Torian, Ward, Webert and Yancey; Senators: Barker, Boysko, Locke and Mason

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, violent crime encompasses homicide, murder, assault, arson, larceny, motor vehicle theft, sexual assault, rape, and kidnapping; and

WHEREAS, as reported by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 40 to 51 percent of all violent victimizations and 32 to 40 percent of property crimes in the nation were not reported to police each year between 1995 and 2015; and

WHEREAS, of those crimes reported to police, 44 to 50 percent of violent victimization cases and 16 to 20 percent of property crimes cases were cleared by police; and

WHEREAS, researchers from the Bureau of Justice Statistics have attributed this problem to codes of silence, fear of reprisal, desensitization to violence, lack of cooperation with law enforcement, sense of apathy, and distrust of law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, not speaking up or taking action when one becomes a victim or witness of a crime gives the perpetrator or perpetrators permission, power, and a place to continue these behaviors to the detriment of a community; and

WHEREAS, all Virginians are encouraged to be a voice for those who are too afraid to speak up or take action in such situations and to take a public stand against violent crime in their respective communities; 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, The Catalyst Effect, LLC, and the Silence Empowers Violence Community Care and Action Teams will observe Silence Empowers Violence Break the Code Awareness-to-Action Week by educating communities about the psychological trauma and monetary effects of unresolved and unreported crimes; and

WHEREAS, these organizations will also encourage individuals to volunteer with community service and violence prevention organizations; to engage youths in creating violence prevention, intervention, and postvention initiatives for their respective communities, as well as in violence prevention and awareness contests using media, art, and drama; and to empower individuals within their respective communities to facilitate community forums and events to combat hopelessness and build healthy relationships and trust; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate the third full week of September, in 2019 and in each succeeding year, as Silence Empowers Violence Break the Code Awareness-to-Action Week in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to The Catalyst Effect, LLC, so that members of the organization may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly in this matter; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates post the designation of this week on the General Assembly's website.

INTRODUCED

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