

2017 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 612

Designating April 29, in 2017 and in each succeeding year, as Missing Persons Day in Virginia.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 24, 2017

Agreed to by the Senate, February 14, 2017

WHEREAS, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Crime Information Center, in 2015, there were 84,961 active missing persons cases, 42,032 of which were related to juveniles under the age of 21; and

WHEREAS, the total number of missing persons reports increased by 0.1 percent in 2015, and at the end of 2015, there were 753 missing persons reported during the year who had not been found or had not returned home; and

WHEREAS, in the Commonwealth, there are currently 630 open missing persons cases, many of which date back to the 1960s, and 283 sets of unidentified human remains; these numbers increase dramatically when nearby cases in surrounding states are factored in; and

WHEREAS, in response to these alarming trends, nonprofit organizations such as Help Save the Next Girl were founded to educate members of the public in an effort to prevent future abductions and disappearances and to provide comfort and support to the families of the missing; and

WHEREAS, Help Save the Next Girl was established in honor of Morgan Dana Harrington, a 20-year-old student at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University who was abducted and murdered in 2009; and

WHEREAS, like many nonprofit organizations, Help Save the Next Girl cultivates strong relationships with members of the community, public safety officers, and the media to raise awareness of abductions and predatory violence, helps disseminate urgent information about missing persons, and provides support to families of missing persons; and

WHEREAS, all missing persons deserve to be searched for, regardless of age, gender, race, or status, and the Commonwealth is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all of its citizens; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate April 29, in 2017 and in each succeeding year, as Missing Persons Day in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to Help Save the Next Girl so that members of the organization may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter; and, be it

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

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