

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

22-175

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

October 3, 2017

To declare October 2017 as “Domestic Violence Awareness Month” in the District of Columbia.

WHEREAS, domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behavior used to exert power and control over an intimate partner;

WHEREAS, the dignity, safety, and well-being of all residents is the foundation of a vibrant and healthy community;

WHEREAS, intimate partner violence is an epidemic in the District of Columbia, where, in 2016, there were 17 domestic violence-related homicides;

WHEREAS, domestic violence does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic status, religion, or race;

WHEREAS, an estimated one out of every 4 women will experience domestic violence at some point in her lifetime, and, based on that information, there may be as many as 89,000 victims of domestic violence residing in the District;

WHEREAS, 36,699 domestic violence-related calls were made to the Office of Unified Communications in 2016 – approximately one call every 14 minutes – which represents a 10% increase from 2014;

WHEREAS, 5,578 petitions for Civil Protection Orders were filed in 2016, representing a 10% increase over 2014;

WHEREAS, all forms of domestic violence, including physical, psychological, emotional, and economic abuse, have devastating long-term effects on victims, and demand a response from the District’s legal and social services systems, as well as overall resources;

WHEREAS, many victims are forced to remain in dangerous and at times lethal situations due to their inability to access long-term affordable housing;

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WHEREAS, according to the 2016 Homeless Point-in-Time count report, 20% of the District's homeless families reported a history of domestic violence, and 10% were currently homeless as a direct result of a violent incident;

WHEREAS, nationally, domestic violence affects employment, resulting in \$3 billion to \$5 billion worth of lost wages and reduced productivity each year;

WHEREAS, domestic violence has a major effect on children and teens, and the building blocks of healthy relationships and consequences of abuse must be addressed both in schools and in the community;

WHEREAS, there are victims of domestic violence who because of their cultural heritage, sexual orientation, or gender identity deserve a specialized service response that is informed by their cultural expectations and norms;

WHEREAS, the District has taken important steps of increasing funding support to help victims of domestic violence by providing life-saving public emergency services, establishing 24-hour hotlines, providing support for domestic violence housing, and, through the efforts of the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants and the Department of Human Services, ensuring that high-quality services are available to every victim seeking help; and

WHEREAS, eradicating domestic violence requires the commitment and support of the government, in addition to continued public awareness, acknowledgment, and responsibility by and for all.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the "Domestic Violence Awareness Month Recognition Resolution of 2017".

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes the severity of the domestic violence crisis in the District of Columbia and continues to raise public awareness and bring this often-hidden issue into the open, and declares October of 2017 as "Domestic Violence Awareness Month" in the District of Columbia.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.