

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

24-232

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

September 20, 2022

To declare the month of October 2022 as “Domestic Violence Awareness Month” in the District of Columbia.

WHEREAS, protecting and improving the dignity and safety of all residents is the foundation of a vibrant and healthy community;

WHEREAS, domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behavior used to exert power and control over an intimate partner that jeopardizes the security and well-being of District residents, and such destructive acts will not be tolerated;

WHEREAS, all forms of domestic violence – including physical, psychological, emotional, and economic abuse – can have devastating consequences for survivors and their families;

WHEREAS, 44 percent of women and 29 percent of men in the District have experienced intimate partner physical violence, sexual violence, or stalking in their lifetimes;

WHEREAS, approximately 736 million women across the world have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner or sexual violence from a non-partner;

WHEREAS, nearly 99 percent of survivors experienced economic abuse from their partner, with many also facing long-term financial consequences as a result of intimate partner violence;

WHEREAS, nationally, in a one-day snapshot in 2021, 771 survivors received help from domestic violence service providers in Washington, D.C., with 70 percent of those survivors receiving housing;

WHEREAS, during that same one-day snapshot, 175 additional survivors called domestic violence hotlines;

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WHEREAS, in that same 24-hour period, providers were nevertheless unable to meet approximately 32 survivors' requests for housing or emergency shelter, which translates to an estimated 9,444 unmet requests annually;

WHEREAS, of District residents experiencing homelessness in 2022, 44.8 percent of adults in families and 20.1 percent of single adults reported some history of domestic violence victimization;

WHEREAS, 40 percent of homeless youth in the District indicate that they have experienced domestic violence;

WHEREAS, according to the 2017 DC Women's Needs Assessment Report, Black women, who comprise only 52 percent of the adult women's population, accounted for 75 percent of the District's unaccompanied homeless women's population;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on many communities and has exacerbated long-existing income and wealth inequalities that affect domestic violence survivors globally;

WHEREAS, compared to 2019, District service providers saw a 60% increase in the demand for services from survivors in 2020;

WHEREAS, in addition to the increased demand for services, local domestic violence service providers are reporting a significant increase in the lethality of domestic violence;

WHEREAS, economic stability and access to financial resources can be a critical factor in a survivor's ability to leave an abuser or dangerous environment;

WHEREAS, the District must commit to addressing the racial, social, and economic inequities that are uniquely harmful to communities of color and that hinder many survivors from thriving after leaving an abusive relationship;

WHEREAS, there is a continuing need for survivors to have access to culturally-specific services which affirm their heritage, customs, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other lived experiences;

WHEREAS, service providers should receive adequate funding and support from local, regional, and federal governments to address the growing demand and greater need for housing, counseling, legal, and culturally-specific services;

WHEREAS, the goal of Domestic Violence Awareness Month is to improve awareness of domestic violence and outreach to residents and community members, and foster cooperation between public and private actors to end domestic violence in the District;

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WHEREAS, the District can do much more to support survivors and service providers, and the Council will continue to partner with District agencies, community-based organizations, and residents to keep survivors safe.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Domestic Violence Awareness Month Recognition Resolution of 2022”.

Sec. 2. The Council declares the month of October 2022 as “Domestic Violence Awareness Month” in the District of Columbia.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.