

No. R-474. Senate concurrent resolution congratulating OUR House of Central Vermont on its 25th anniversary.

(S.C.R.59)

By Senators Doyle, Cummings, and Pollina,

S.C.R. 59. Senate concurrent resolution congratulating OUR House of Central Vermont on its 25th anniversary.

Whereas, OUR House of Central Vermont was established in 1989 as a nonprofit organization to help children believed to be victims of sexual abuse, and

Whereas, the OUR acronym stands for One Unified Response and OUR House was the first advocacy center in the State established to assist children presumed to have sustained sexual abuse, and

Whereas, in 2014, an organization with the same mission as OUR House exists in nearly every Vermont county, and

Whereas, the realization that advocating on behalf of sexually abused children is important is documented in the national expansion of similar support services, and

Whereas, OUR House works collaboratively with law enforcement, the Department for Children and Families (DCF), and assists in the provision of therapeutic services, and

Whereas, on average, OUR House handles 120 cases per year, and a Vermont State Police officer assigned to Washington County cases works with the organization once a week, and

Whereas, in cases where an investigation is warranted, OUR House works with law enforcement and DCF to make the process less intimidating for the child victim, and

Whereas, children may be questioned at OUR House instead of at a police station or school, and

Whereas, the OUR House staff consists of Executive Director Will Roberts, Case Manager Kerrie Greig, and part-time therapist Ulrike Wasmus, and

Whereas, OUR House's experience is that child sexual abuse does not know any demographic boundaries and can affect every strata of society, and

Whereas, during April, which was Sexual Violence Abuse Month, OUR House board chair Karen Lauzon promoted ways that child sexual abuse can be prevented, including speaking to children about healthy sexuality and personal safety, and

Whereas, OUR House is celebrating its 25th anniversary with a fundraising dinner and auction on May 10, 2014 at the Barre Elks Club, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates OUR House of Central Vermont on its 25th anniversary, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to OUR House in Barre.