

Senator Hughes

RESOLUTION

Recognizing National Crime Victims' Rights Week in
Ohio, April 26-May 2, 2009.

WHEREAS, The members of the Senate of the 128th General Assembly of Ohio are pleased to recognize April 26-May 2, 2009, as National Crime Victims' Rights Week in Ohio; and

WHEREAS, In an effort to increase public knowledge of, and pay tribute to, crime victims and survivors, National Crime Victims' Rights Week was first designated by U.S. Congress in April of 1984, with commemorative legislation passed each year since. More than 25 million Americans are victims of crime each year, including 5.2 million victims of violent crime. Affecting individuals of all races and socio-economic backgrounds, these events have long-lasting repercussions, not only for victims and their families but also for communities and society as a whole. In order to prevent the escalation of crime in the future, it is vital for all concerned citizens to join in educating the general public, including potential offenders, about the effects of crime and in developing a general consciousness regarding its far reaching devastation; and

WHEREAS, Our system of justice is founded on the principle of "justice for all" citizens, and although our nation has worked to expand rights and services for victims of crime, we must continue to strive to ensure that these same protections are available for underserved members of our population. Victims with disabilities and mental illness, those who are teenagers or are

elderly, and those who live in rural areas or have different ethnic backgrounds must be treated with dignity and respect, as must all crime victims and their families. Established through VOCA in 1984, the Crime Victims Fund holds federal offenders accountable for their crimes by imposing fines and other penalties, which in turn supports victim assistance and victim compensation programs throughout our nation and here in Ohio and helps to ensure that such services are available to all who need them; and

WHEREAS, In observance of this year's commemoration, themed "25 Years of Rebuilding Lives: Celebrating the Victims of Crime Act," we ask all Ohioans to support and participate in events throughout their communities. Twenty-five years ago, state compensation programs were poorly funded, which led to a scarcity of victims services and left victims with little or no help. The groundwork that led to the passage of VOCA has made services more accessible for victims and their families and has provided a steady source of federal funding that now benefits thousands of programs serving millions of crime victims every year. It is imperative that we take this opportunity to recognize the profound and positive impact that VOCA has had in helping crime victims become active participants in the criminal justice system and in helping them progress from victim to survivor; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the Senate of the 128th General Assembly of Ohio, in adopting this Resolution, recognize April 26-May 2, 2009, as National Crime Victims' Rights Week in Ohio; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit duly authenticated copies of this Resolution to the news media of Ohio.