

## Legislation Text

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Proclaiming and designating the week of April 6, 2014 as “Philadelphia Crime Victim’s Rights Week” to encourage citizens to assist crime victims and to increase community awareness and support for the organizations that help crime victims rebuild their lives.

WHEREAS, National Crime Victim’s Rights Week was established by President Ronald Reagan in 1981 to promote assistance for victim’s of crime and is sponsored by the Office for Victims of Crime which provides funding to state assistance and compensation programs that aid victims of crime; and

WHEREAS, Statistically one out of every 86 people in Philadelphia will become victim to a crime, violent or non-violent, at some point in their life. Comparatively, this is much higher than our statewide average of which one out of every 287 people will be victim to a crime at some point in their life; and

WHEREAS, According to the Pew Charitable Trust report on the City of Philadelphia in 2012, even though the number of violent crimes in Philadelphia declined by 3.5 percent, the City’s violent crime rates are above average compared to other major cities in the United States. The US average violent crime rate in 2011 was 213.6, while the Philadelphia average violent crime rate in 2011 was 676; and

WHEREAS, Even though 2013 marked the lowest murder rate in the City of Philadelphia since 1967 at 246 murders, according to the Pew Charitable Trusts report of 2013, 62% of homicide victims from 2007 to 2011 were between the ages of 18 and 34 and that 74% happened to be killed outdoors; and

WHEREAS, According to the National Center for Victims of Crime, 25% of crime victims experienced lifetime PTSD and 23.3% of family members of homicide victims have also developed PTSD at some point in their lives; and

WHEREAS, In 2003, over 12% of all victim compensation payments went toward mental health counseling for victims of crime, according to the National Center for Victims of Crime; and

WHEREAS, Victims of crime living in the City of Philadelphia may receive compensation through the Victims Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP) which is operated by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency; and

WHEREAS, The Victims Compensation Assistance Program aids victims of crime by helping cover their medical, counseling, and travel expenses, as well as, the loss of their earnings and support. In addition, many local Philadelphia victim service organizations, such as the Anti-Violence Partnership of Philadelphia and Crime Victim Services provide free counseling for victims of crime; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the week of April 6th 2014 will be recognized as “Philadelphia Crime Victim’s Rights Week” to encourage citizens to assist crime victims and to increase community awareness and support for the organizations that help crime victims rebuild their lives.

