

**No. R-224. Senate concurrent resolution congratulating O.U.R. House of Central Vermont, Inc. on its 20th anniversary.**

(S.C.R.31)

By Senators Doyle, Cummings and Scott,

*Whereas*, in 1989, citizens in Washington County who were concerned about the sexual abuse of children and sought to address this problem in a way that would be the least painful for the victims and their families, established O.U.R. House in Barre, and

*Whereas*, O.U.R. House through its original role as a children's advocacy center provides "a comprehensive, culturally competent, multidisciplinary team response to allegations of child abuse in a dedicated, child-friendly setting," and

*Whereas*, these response mechanisms, which are at the core of a children's advocacy center's operation, enable child victims and their families to complete the difficult and painful process of reporting an incident of sexual abuse, and

*Whereas*, O.U.R. House is a charter member of the National Children's Alliance and was the first children's advocacy center in Vermont, and

*Whereas*, more recently, O.U.R. House has assumed a second and equally important role, establishing the Special Investigative Unit (SIU) for Washington County, and

*Whereas*, SIUs are multidisciplinary task forces "that investigate sexually based crimes (both against adults and children)," and their scope will

eventually be expanded to include investigations of incidents of domestic violence and other crimes against vulnerable persons (the mentally and physically disabled), and

*Whereas*, in 2009, O.U.R. House is commemorating its 20th anniversary and its outstanding work addressing incidents of sexual abuse, both against children and now adults, and it merits legislative commendation, *now therefore be it*

***Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:***

That the General Assembly congratulates O.U.R. House of Central Vermont, Inc. on its 20th anniversary, *and be it further*

***Resolved:*** That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the president of OUR House, Steve Mackenzie.