

No. R-9. House concurrent resolution recognizing January 10, 2013 as Homeless Awareness Day at the State House.

(H.C.R.2)

Offered by: Representative Head of South Burlington

Whereas, being deprived of a permanent place to live is an indignity that far too many Vermont individuals and families continue to endure, and

Whereas, homelessness has been a persistent and growing problem in Vermont for over 30 years, and

Whereas, the annual one-day “Point in Time” count of people who are homeless in Vermont reflects a sad societal commentary, and

Whereas, Vermont’s homeless population, which includes people “couch surfing” or otherwise precariously housed, rose from 2,281 in 2008 to 2,819 in 2012, and

Whereas, in Executive Order No. 03-12, Governor Peter Shumlin re-established the Vermont Council on Homelessness to address comprehensively this serious public policy problem, and

Whereas, a growing percentage of the homeless are families with children, and the “Emergency Shelter/Solutions Grants Vermont Annual Report for State Fiscal Year 2012” (the ESG Report) documented 4,244 persons sheltered, of which 952 or 22 percent were homeless children, and

Whereas, with increasing frequency, the homeless are individuals or families who have suffered a personal trauma such as job loss or domestic abuse, and

Whereas, many homeless families have one adult working member but due to financial circumstances are unable to afford permanent housing and are forced to live in temporary arrangements with family members or friends or in a shelter facility, and

Whereas, according to the ESG Report, in FY 2012, the average length of stay in the state’s shelters was 36.3 days, higher than the 15.2 days in 2002, and the insufficiency of affordable housing is commonly accepted as one of the primary reasons for this dramatic increase, and

Whereas, to emphasize the urgency of the problems facing Vermont’s homeless, a Homelessness Awareness Day and Memorial Vigil at the State House are being held on this, the second, day of the 2013 legislative session, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly welcomes those individuals visiting the General Assembly for Homelessness Awareness Day at the State House, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness.