

No. R-6. House concurrent resolution designating January 16, 2019 as Homelessness Awareness Day at the State House.

(H.C.R.6)

Offered by: Representatives Stevens of Waterbury, Pugh of South Burlington, and Krowinski of Burlington

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

Whereas, the severe early-life impediments homeless children encounter can result in long-term consequences, and

Whereas, homeless singles often struggle with physical and mental health challenges, as well as substance abuse, and

Whereas, according to the 2018 Point-In-Time Count Report, 1,291 Vermonters, 23 percent of whom were children, were homeless on a single day in January 2018, an increase of 5 percent over 2017; 12 percent were adults currently fleeing domestic or sexual violence; 139, or 12 more than in 2017, were chronically homeless; and 25 percent had a severe mental illness, and

Whereas, despite the statewide increase in the number of homeless Vermonters, the number of homeless persons in Rutland County decreased from 183 to 114 and the Lamoille County decrease was from 64 to 24, and

Whereas, other encouraging indicators were two subgroup decreases in homelessness: 11 percent among youths ages 12 to 24 and 18 percent for persons with a substance use-related disorder, and

Whereas, the Vermont Housing Opportunity Grant Program's Annual Report for fiscal year 2018 documented that the average length of stay in publicly funded shelters was 50 days, the longest in over 16 years, indicating that significant barriers, including rental affordability and availability, prevent Vermonters without homes from accessing permanent housing, and

Whereas, the continued degree of homelessness, especially among children, youths, people fleeing domestic violence, persons with disabilities, and those who are chronically homeless, remains a public policy concern of great importance, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly, while recognizing that much work remains to be done, applauds the progress of Vermont's housing and homeless service organizations in addressing homelessness and designates January 16, 2019 as 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, the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance, and the Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition.