

**SENATE RESOLUTION
1995-8631**

By Senators Kohl and Rasmussen

WHEREAS, A year ago today, sixteen-year-old Melissa "Missy" Fernandes, who aspired to become a marine biologist, died as a result of a drive-by shooting; and

WHEREAS, The Ballard High School student was an innocent bystander when the spat between two local gangs erupted into senseless gunfire; and

WHEREAS, Missy was the first student to be killed on a high-school campus in Washington State; and

WHEREAS, Missy's tragic fate inspired Ballard High School to institute a peer-mediation group to resolve problems without resorting to violence; and

WHEREAS, Missy was neither the first nor the last teenager in Washington State to be a victim of youth gang violence; and

WHEREAS, The death of Missy and too many like her has spawned the formation within the Seattle School District of a Safe Schools Committee to stem the rising tide of violence in our schools; and

WHEREAS, Other groups in Ballard have worked to stem youth violence, such as Mothers Against Violence in America, the Ballard District Council's Anti-Violence Task Force, Students Against Violence in Everywhere; and

WHEREAS, The Crown Hill Chamber of Commerce placed a bench in memory of Melissa at the site where she was gunned down at Ballard High School; and

WHEREAS, The specter of youth-on-youth violence continues to instill a growing and gnawing fear among students and parents; and

WHEREAS, Nearly five hundred firearms were confiscated from Washington high school students during the 1993-94 school year; and

WHEREAS, Youth violence is only yet another symptom of how pervasive violence has become in our society; and

WHEREAS, Our youth represent our future;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate hereby observe a moment of silence in the hope that Melissa Fernandes' death will serve to remind us from now until the shooting ends, that too many youngsters have died from gunfire and that we as a community have much work to do to ensure that her untimely death not be in vain.

I, Marty Brown, Secretary of the Senate,
do hereby certify that this is a true and
correct copy of Senate Resolution 1995-8631,
adopted by the Senate March 24, 1995.

MARTY BROWN
Secretary of the Senate

