
ENGROSSED HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4020

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1997 Regular Session

By Representatives Ballasiotes, Costa, Radcliff, Cole, Hankins, Quall, Skinner, Morris, Thompson, Poulsen, Kenney, DeBolt, Conway, Mason, Benson, Cooper, Delvin, Blalock, Honeyford, Dunshee, Van Luven, Zellinsky, Mulliken, Alexander, Scott, L. Thomas, Clements, Parlette, Mastin, Chandler, Schoesler, Robertson and Linville

Read first time 03/15/97. Referred to Committee on .

1 TO THE HONORABLE WILLIAM J. CLINTON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED
2 STATES, AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
3 OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
4 THE UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

5 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
6 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
7 represent and petition as follows:

8 WHEREAS, In applying and interpreting the vital guarantees of the
9 United States Constitution that protects the liberties of all citizens,
10 the criminal justice system has lost an essential balance; and

11 WHEREAS, One violent crime is committed in America every sixteen
12 seconds; and

13 WHEREAS, The criminal justice system has not provided sufficient
14 protection or representation of the innocent, the honest, and the
15 helpless victims of crime; and

16 WHEREAS, With over thirty-five million Americans victimized in the
17 United States each year, crime victims are rapidly becoming a majority;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Crime victims play an indispensable role in bringing
20 offenders to justice, thus preventing further violence; and

1 WHEREAS, As a nation devoted to freedom, liberty, and justice for
2 all, Americans must plant the seeds of justice to restore and protect
3 the rights of those who have been criminally victimized; and

4 WHEREAS, Harvesting justice over the last two decades has been
5 accomplished in part by the millions of survivors of criminal acts,
6 their families, and advocates whose commitment and spirit has
7 persevered while confronting an increasingly violent nation; and

8 WHEREAS, In 1982, the President's Task Force on Victims of Crime
9 recommended an amendment to the Constitution of the United States
10 addressing victims' rights; and

11 WHEREAS, In 1989, the citizens of Washington State adopted an
12 amendment to the state Constitution granting basic and fundamental
13 rights to the victims and families of victims of felony crimes; and

14 WHEREAS, Under Article V of the Constitution of the United States,
15 amendments to the Constitution of the United States may be proposed by
16 the Congress of the United States or, upon the application of the
17 legislatures of two-thirds of the states, the Congress shall call a
18 constitutional convention for the purpose of proposing amendments; and

19 WHEREAS, There is currently before the Congress for consideration
20 a proposed victims' rights amendment to the Constitution of the United
21 States;

22 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists, respectfully request that the
23 Congress adopt the proposed victims' rights amendment to the
24 Constitution of the United States, and that the amendment be submitted
25 to the states for ratification.

26 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
27 transmitted to the Honorable William J. Clinton, President of the
28 United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker
29 of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the
30 State of Washington.

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