



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, New York State has continuously demonstrated a strong commitment to fighting all forms of crime, with historic reductions in crime over the past two decades, and this commitment also includes providing assistance to victims of crime, to ensure they have a voice in the criminal justice system and are treated with dignity, respect, and compassion; and

Whereas, since 1966, the New York State Office of Victim Services has been an integral part of the healing process for crime victims by providing a critical safety net for their needs and those of their families; and

Whereas, in 2016, the Office of Victim Services distributed approximately \$22 million in compensation that helped innocent victims of crime and their families pay for medical bills, counseling, moving expenses, and essential personal property such as eye glasses and clothing, and also reimbursed medical providers for the cost of forensic rape exams to help protect the privacy of victims of sexual assault; and

Whereas, in 2016, the Office of Victim Services distributed more than \$45.5 million in funding to more than 220 victims' assistance programs in all 62 counties throughout the state, at no cost to taxpayers; the agency's funds come almost entirely from fines, mandatory surcharges, and crime victim assistance fees that certain offenders pay after conviction in either New York State or federal court; and

Whereas, the Office of Victim Services helps to meet the needs of innocent crime victims and because it also recognizes the unique challenges faced by children who have been victimized and their families, the agency currently funds 18 organizations operating Child Advocacy Centers, which provided a wide breadth of services in 2016 that helped more than 12,000 children start their journey toward recovery; and

Whereas, the Office of Victim Services also paid nearly 4,700 compensation claims filed in connection with cases of child sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, and child pornography, representing approximately one-third of all compensation claims paid by the agency in 2016; and

Whereas, the Office of Victim Services joins victim assistance programs, child advocacy centers, and communities across New York State and the nation in recognizing National Crime Victims' Rights Week by hosting events highlighting the importance and awareness of crime victims' rights; and

Whereas, by embracing this year's national theme of "Strength, Resilience, Justice," New York State reaffirms its dedication to supporting and strengthening victims and survivors in the aftermath of crime, to building resilience in its communities and among victim advocates, and to ensuring justice for individuals affected by crime; and

Whereas, all New Yorkers join during National Crime Victims' Rights Week to highlight the importance of victims' rights and to extend our appreciation and admiration for those courageous individuals who are willing to speak about their experiences so they can educate and empower others, as we solemnly pause to remember those whose lives have been forever altered by crime;

Now, Therefore, I, Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim April 2 - 8, 2017 as


CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

in the Empire State.



G i v e n under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State
at the Capitol in the City of Albany this thirtieth day
of March in the year two thousand seventeen.


Governor


Secretary to the Governor