



Legislation Text

File #: RES 16-653, **Version:** 1

Adopting the Start by Believing Community Initiative in the City of Saint Paul to support victims of sexual violence.

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul City Council shares a critical concern for victims of sexual violence and a desire to support their needs for justice and healing; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports 1 in 6 women, and 1 in 33 men in the United States experience rape or attempted rape, at some point in their lives; and

WHEREAS, an analysis of the Minnesota Student Survey data by the University of Minnesota estimated 60 percent of teen first pregnancies in Minnesota are preceded by experiences of molestation, rape or attempted rape; and

WHEREAS, 188 cases of child sexual abuse in Ramsey County were identified among reported cases of maltreatment in 2011; and

WHEREAS, current estimates suggest no more than 20 percent of sexual assaults will be reported to law enforcement and less than 3 percent will result in the conviction and incarceration of the perpetrator; and

WHEREAS, the “Start by Believing” public awareness campaign (a program of End Violence Against Women International) is designed to improve the responses of friends, family members, and community professionals, so they can help victims to access supportive resources and engage the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, the Ramsey County Start by Believing Community, is a community initiative to create a culture where victims feel more empowered to report their abuse, and to develop an infrastructure of response that is properly informed and trained about trauma and eliminates unintentional human biases; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul will partner with Ramsey County to support Start by Believing initiatives, and to prevent and respond to sexual violence in the community; and

WHEREAS, Saint Paul and its criminal justice system is united in the goals to prevent and reduce sexual violence in our community, from children to vulnerable adults;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Saint Paul City Council is in full support of the Ramsey County Resolution: A Start by Believing Community Initiative, adopted on April 12, 2016 by the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Saint Paul City Council and its community partners will expand support for sexual violence survivors through training, education and outreach;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Saint Paul City Council, in partnership with the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners, adopt the Start by Believing Community Initiative and its goal for everyone to believe victims upon report.