

City of Albany

Proclamation

**NATIONAL VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK
APRIL 18 – 24, 2021**

WHEREAS, more than 26 million people become victims of crime each year, and these crimes also affect family members, friends, neighbors, and co-workers; and

WHEREAS, the Alameda County Victim/Witness Division is dedicated to ensuring the rights of crime victims and their families by providing services to aid in their recovery from the emotional, psychological, social and economic impact of crime as they reclaim their sense of safety, well – being and dignity; and

WHEREAS, the Victim/Witness staff assists victims of crime without regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, and gender identity or immigration status.

WHEREAS, victims are faced with many challenges as a result of crime; often times, victims enter systems that fail to meet their needs, provide appropriate services and fail to treat them with the dignity and respect they deserve; and involving survivors helps victim service providers and criminal justice professionals understand the culture, values, and expectations of underserved and unserved victims who seek assistance and justice; and

WHEREAS, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office Victim/Witness Assistance Program was the first such program established in 1974. The Alameda County District Attorney's Office continues to join forces with the victim service providers, criminal justice agencies, and concerned citizens throughout Alameda County and America to raise awareness of victim's rights and observe National Crime Victims' Rights Week; and

WHEREAS, in 1984, the Crime Victims Fund was established by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) to provide a permanent source of support for crime victim services and compensation; and

WHEREAS, Alameda County District Attorney's Office was the first in the nation to create a Victim/Witness Assistance Division; and survivors, community service providers, criminal justice professionals and victim advocates are working together to enhance a criminal justice system response that is accessible, culturally competent and appropriate for all victims of crime; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office Victim/Witness Assistance Division provided over 312 services to more than 56 crime victims, including but not limited to, child victims of violence and sexual abuse, stalking victims, survivors of homicide victims, human trafficking, crimes against elders and dependent adults, sexual assault, domestic violence, robbery and other crimes;

WHEREAS, the Victim/Witness Assistance Claims Division assisted more than 8 victims of crime in Albany in receiving state compensation funds; successfully compensated \$15,165 which paid for services for victims of crime without independent means; and

WHEREAS, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office has been a leader in outreach and services to underserved populations including commercial sexual exploitation of children, sexual assault victims from cold hit/DNA cases, immigrant victims, urban youth, and victims in the LGBTQ community, as well as victims with disabilities such as deaf and hard of hearing; and

WHEREAS, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office has been bridging the gap between law enforcement and the community and building the community's trust in the Criminal Justice System; it will continue to do so as over 40 years of victim services in Alameda County is celebrated; and

WHEREAS, National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 18-24, 2021, provides an opportunity to celebrate the energy, creativity, and commitment that launched the victims' rights movement, inspired its progress, and continues to advance the cause of justice for crime victims.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Albany City Council does hereby proclaim April 18-24, 2021 to be the National Victims' Rights Week in the City of Albany and reaffirms the commitment to respect and enforce victims' rights and addressing their needs during Victims' Rights Weeks and throughout the year; and express our appreciation for those victims and survivors of crime who have turned personal tragedy into a motivating force to improve the response to victims of crime and build a more just community.

Date: April 5, 2021

GE'NELL GARY, MAYOR