

City of Albany

Proclamation

IN RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK April 24 – 30, 2022

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; and

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, beginning with one Victim Advocate. Today, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office employs more than 60 individuals dedicated to working with Victims of Crime; 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 Victim-Witness Assistance Division partners with 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 2021, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office Victim/Witness Assistance Division provided over 400 services to more than 82 crime victims in Albany, 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; and

WHEREAS, for victims of crime without independent financial means, the District Attorney's office facilitated financial support through the victim Compensation Program; 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; and

WHEREAS, National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 24-30, 2022, 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 hereby proclaims April 24 – 30, 2022 to be the National and Alameda County 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 18, 2022

PRESTON JORDAN, MAYOR