

Senators Warren and Ananich offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 121.

A resolution to declare March 5, 2014, as Spread the Word to End the Word Day in the state of Michigan.

Whereas, Respectful and inclusive language is essential to the movement for the dignity and humanity of people with intellectual disabilities. However, much of society does not recognize the hurtful, dehumanizing, and exclusive effects of the words "retard" and "retarded"; and

Whereas, The R-word has become a common taunt used to make fun of others. Often unwittingly, the word is used to denote behavior that is clumsy, hapless, and even hopeless. But whether intentional or not, the word conjures up a painful stereotype of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It hurts, even if you don't mean it that way; and

Whereas, The Spread the Word to End the Word campaign is an ongoing effort by Special Olympics Michigan and their supporters to raise the consciousness of society about the dehumanizing and hurtful effects of the word "retard(ed)" and encourage people to pledge to stop using the R-word; and

Whereas, This campaign, created by youth with and without developmental disabilities, is intended to engage schools, organizations, and communities to rally and pledge their support at www.r-word.org with a goal of reaching 100,000 pledges; and

Whereas, On March 5, 2014, citizens across the state of Michigan and throughout the United States will lead a day of awareness to Spread the Word to End the Word; and

Whereas, The day will be devoted to educating and raising awareness of the positive impact individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities have in our communities and why the use of the R-word is hurtful, even in casual conversation; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That this legislative body hereby acknowledges March 5, 2014, as Spread the Word to End the Word Day in the state of Michigan.