



# Office of the City Clerk

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## Legislation Text

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### **DECLARING JANUARY 2014 AS STALKING AWARENESS MONTH**

WHEREAS, One in six women and one in nineteen men have been a victim of stalking at some point in their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, Women are disproportionately a target for the perpetration of this criminal activity, although anyone can be a victim regardless of age, sex, background, or gender identity. Many victims are stalked by ex-partners. Occasionally, the stalker may be an acquaintance or even a total stranger; and

WHEREAS, The perpetrators of this crime seek complete power and control over the subject of their harassment. It has been reported that 6.6 million people are stalked each year in the United States. More than half of female victims and more than a third of male victims were stalked before the age of 25; and

WHEREAS, Stalkers intimidate their victims through repeated unwanted contact, including harassment by phone calls, text messages, or emails. Cyberstalking is becoming more and more frequent as more than one quarter of stalking victims are reporting harassment through the internet or electronic monitoring; and

WHEREAS, Stalking victims can suffer anxiety, depression, and insomnia. Some feel compelled to move or change jobs. This harassment can also escalate to sexual assault, physical abuse, or even homicide; and

WHEREAS, Much has been done to combat this insidious crime. In March of 2013, President Barack Obama signed the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act that expanded protections for Native American, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender victims of stalking, domestic violence, and sexual assault. This legislation now requires colleges to report crime statistics on stalking. The reauthorization continues to allow relief for immigrant victims, and increases those support and training programs that have proven effective in bringing offenders to justice; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that this legislative body express its continued commitment to combat stalking and support for its victims through compassionate treatment and effective enforcement of anti-stalking laws; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED That we, the Mayor and members of the City of Chicago City Council, gathered together on this 15<sup>th</sup> Day of January, 2014, do hereby declare January, 2014 to be Stalking Awareness Month in Chicago and encourage the citizens of this city to recognize the warning signs of stalking, understand that stalking is a serious crime, and encourage those who may be victimized to speak out and ask for help.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to the Chicago Justice Project and the Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network.