

House Resolution 1311

By: Representatives Ralston of the 7th, Lunsford of the 110th, Benfield of the 85th, Levitas of the 82nd, and Bearden of the 68th

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing Wednesday, February 20, 2008, as Victim-Witness Advocate Day in Georgia;
2 and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, on Wednesday, February 20, 2008, the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of the
4 State of Georgia will sponsor Victim-Witness Day in Georgia at the capitol; and

5 WHEREAS, legislators are encouraged to join with victim-witness advocates, district
6 attorneys, and solicitors-general from across the state to recognize the important role of
7 victim-witness advocates and to increase awareness of their mission of providing support to
8 victims of all crimes; and

9 WHEREAS, with the enactment of the Georgia Crime Victims' Bill of Rights in 1995,
10 individuals impacted by violent crime are afforded specific services to enable them to take
11 steps toward restoration, and through the district attorney offices in each of the 49 Georgia
12 judicial circuits, and the solicitor-general offices in 25 of the 159 Georgia counties,
13 victim-witness advocates are the only service agencies mandated to serve all crime victims;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, advocates are present and available to guide these individuals through what can
16 be a confusing, complicated judicial process, and victim-witness personnel assist with
17 obtaining compensation through the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and appropriate
18 restitution through the courts; and

19 WHEREAS, victim-witness personnel make referrals to professional and other community
20 resources and provide notification of all judicial proceedings; and

21 WHEREAS, each judicial circuit and county has unique needs, resources, and services, and
22 the advocates work to insure the victim's full participation in the judicial process; and

1 WHEREAS, the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of the State of Georgia's Victim-Witness
2 Advocacy Office provides consultation, training, networking, and professional development
3 to advocate personnel, and they also present the needs and concerns of crime victims to the
4 community, elected officials, agencies, and public policy makers through education,
5 resources, collaboration, and advocacy; and

6 WHEREAS, the Victim-Witness Advocacy Office is committed to unifying this state's
7 advocate personnel in voice, purpose, and vision; providing training and orientation for new
8 advocates and volunteers; providing training to advocates, prosecutors, investigators,
9 community officials, and the public regarding crime victim issues; assisting with
10 collaboration between advocacy agencies; assisting with requested training of law
11 enforcement officers and agencies, including but not limited to training on domestic violence,
12 child abuse, elder abuse, criminal process, civil justice, compassion fatigue, and sexual
13 assault; providing up-to-date information through consultation, networking, personal
14 development, and training to prosecution based advocates; supporting prosecution based
15 advocates as they serve all crime victims in Georgia as mandated by the Crime Victims' Bill
16 of Rights.

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
18 the members of this body recognize the importance of victim-witness advocates, support
19 their mission to support victims of all crimes, and declare Wednesday, February 20, 2008,
20 as Victim-Witness Day at the capitol.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
22 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the Prosecuting Attorneys'
23 Council of Georgia.