

RESOLUTION NO. 500

ESTABLISHING A POLICY THAT THE ALBANY COUNTY CRIME VICTIMS AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE CENTER'S CURRENT SERVICE LEVEL BE MAINTAINED WITHOUT REDUCTION OR DIMINUTION

Introduced: 12/6/10

By Messrs. Clenahan, Aylward, Beston, Bullock, Ms. Chapman, Messrs. Clay, Commisso, Ms. Connolly, Messrs. Cotrofeld, Dawson, Domalewicz, Ethier, Gordon, Higgins, Horstmyer, Houghtaling, Infante, Joyce, Ms. Maffia-Tobler, Messrs. Mayo, McCoy, Ms. McKnight, Messrs. Morse, Nichols, Rahm, Reilly, Scavo, Steck, Timmins, Ward, Mss. Willingham and Lockart:

WHEREAS, The Albany County Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center began in 1974 as AWARE (Albany Women Against Rape) and in 1975, the agency became a department of Albany County and was renamed Albany County Rape Crisis Center, and

WHEREAS, The goal of the department was to provide crisis counseling to rape victims over a 24 hour hotline, and to provide advocacy and support for victims in area emergency rooms and police stations, and

WHEREAS, Over the years the Rape Crisis Center grew, the demand for services increased and in 1989 the Center received a grant from the New York State Crime Victims Board to provide advocacy services for victims of violent crime in Albany County, and

WHEREAS, In 2001, the agency formally changed its name to the Albany County Crime Victims and Sexual Violence Center to better reflect the full population of crime victims receiving services, and

WHEREAS, The Crime Victims and Sexual Violence Center now provides an array of essential services to Albany County residents, including support, information and confidential counseling and therapy for victims of sexual assault; court advocacy and assistance to crime victims and their families; educational programs for civic, academic, business and professional groups in Albany County as well as special programs for parents, teachers and youth; and a volunteer program that includes a 24-hour rape crisis hotline and accompaniment of sexual assault victims to emergency rooms and police stations, and

WHEREAS, These services are needed now more than ever – on average someone is sexually assaulted every 127 seconds in the United States and by no means is Albany County immune from this epidemic, and

WHEREAS, The directors, employees and volunteers of the Albany County Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center have provided 35 years of vital and exemplary service to the citizens of Albany County, and

WHEREAS, As part of the 2011 Executive's Budget, a proposal has been made to dramatically reduce the services provided by the Albany County Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center, and

WHEREAS, This proposal would cripple the Center, reduce if not eliminate many of its essential services, jeopardize its current and future grant funding and likely lead to its closure, and

WHEREAS, It is the belief of the Albany County Legislature that the Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center provides essential services to Albany County residents facing the darkest and most difficult times of their lives and that these services must be continued as they are currently provided and not reduced, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, By the Albany County Legislature that a policy is hereby established requiring current services to be maintained by the Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center and that the plan to reduce and diminish the services provided by the Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center is hereby rejected as it is the desire of this Honorable Body to allow the Center to continue providing the same array of services to Albany County residents as it does today, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the County Legislature is directed to forward certified copies of this resolution to the appropriate County Officials.

Adopted by unanimous vote. 12/6/10