



P.O. Box 87592
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May 25, 2012

Re: House Joint Resolution 106

Dear Honorable Congressmen Franks and Honorable Congressman Costa,

Arizona Voice for Crime Victims, Inc., a non-profit 501.c.3 organization, provides legal and social services to crime victims as they endure the trauma of crime and all too often the trauma inflicted by the criminal justice system. We provide free lawyers and social workers to help victims throughout the criminal justice process preserve and protect their rights under Arizona's constitution and statutes, as well as under the federal Crime Victim's Rights Act (CVRA).

We have been providing this service to crime victims since 1996. While Arizona has robust constitutional and statutory rights for crime victims, and while the CVRA is in some measure patterned after those rights, our experience clearly demonstrates that these best efforts are inadequate to fully protect and preserve the rights of crime victims. Despite strong laws and passionate lawyers and social workers, the culture of the criminal justice in too many cases remains hidebound to a structure that denies victims fundamental rights to justice and due process. This is why we are so grateful for your leadership in introducing H. J. Res. 106, the proposed Victims Rights Amendment.

H. J. Res. 106 will restore a proper balance to our justice system. In our U.S. Constitution there are 23 rights for persons accused and convicted of crimes, and properly so; yet, there are no rights for victims. It is this imbalance which is the source of the continuing trauma inflicted on crime victims, who as you know are disproportionately already the disadvantaged and minority members of our society. Too often these victims are left by the side of the road while our justice system passes by on the other side, more focused on the rights of the accused and the interests of the state. This surely meets no one's definition of "justice for all" and falls far short of the mutual promises we make in the Preamble of our Constitution. For these reasons, the American People understand the need for reform and are strongly in support of it.

We strongly endorse H. J. Res. 106, extend profound thanks to you for sponsoring it, and humbly urge you to become passionate advocates for its passage with every one of your colleagues. We stand ready to assist you in this great cause.

Most sincerely,

Tim Jeffries, KM

Hon. Tim Jeffries, KM
President, AVCV Board of Directors