Reps. Anthony, Cynthia Johnson, Brabec, Hood, Rogers, Brixie, Scott, Breen, Hope, Peterson, Steckloff, Garza and Tyrone Carter offered the following resolution:

A resolution to declare youth violence in Michigan a public health epidemic.

Whereas, Youth violence is defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as the intentional use of physical force or power by young people ages 10 to 24 to threaten or harm others, generally within the same age or peer group. Youth violence negatively impacts all types of communities, though the extent and types of youth violence vary; and

Whereas, Evidence shows that youth violence is relatively common in the United States. According to the CDC, nearly 1 in 5 high school students reported being bullied on school property in
the last year, and about 1 in 7 were bullied electronically. Homicide remains the third leading cause of death for people ages 10 to 24. Nationally each day, about 13 young people are victims of homicide and about 1,100 are treated in emergency departments for nonfatal assault-related injuries; and

Whereas, Youth violence impacts communities across the state of Michigan. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 22 percent of public school students in grades 9 through 12 in Michigan reported having been bullied on school property or electronically in 2017, while 24 percent reported having been in at least one physical fight. In addition, some law enforcement agencies in Michigan have reported an increase in violent incidents among youth since the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic; and

Whereas, Gun violence in particular has a devastating effect on youth in Michigan. According to the organization Every Town for Gun Safety, guns are the second leading cause of death among children and teens in Michigan. In addition, an average of 89 children and teens die by guns every year in Michigan, and 52 percent of these deaths are homicides; and

Whereas, Youth violence can negatively impact the physical and mental health of young people. Youth violence has been shown to lead to many long-term negative health and behavioral outcomes including higher rates of smoking, substance use, obesity, high-risk sexual behavior, depression, academic difficulty, school dropout, and suicide. In addition, those involved in youth violence are more likely to become both perpetrators and victims of violence in the future; and

Whereas, The negative effect of youth violence extends to the
entire community. Violence generally increases healthcare costs, decreases property value, and disrupts social services by straining community resources. In addition, youth violence can impact the perceived and actual safety within a community, which can then lessen participation in community events and decrease the viability of local businesses; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we recognize the magnitude of the crisis of youth violence in Michigan and declare it to be a public health epidemic.