CERTIFICATE of RECOGNITION

By virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution in the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, there is hereby officially recognized:

VICTIM ADVOCATE DAY

WHEREAS, victim advocates are individuals committed to assisting victims of crimes and are dedicated professionals constantly seeking to enhance their skills and improve services for crime victims; and

WHEREAS, victim advocates represent a diverse spectrum of disciplines including law enforcement officers, prosecutors, probation and parole officers, volunteers, sexual assault advocates, domestic violence advocates, victim/witness staff, and other victim service providers; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Victim Assistance Academy (VVAA) provides a 45-hour comprehensive, academically-based, interdisciplinary and interactive educational program for victim advocates; along with a curriculum that provides a foundation in the principles and policies of victims' rights, as well as skills, knowledge, and resources that will enable graduates to better meet the needs of all victims; and

WHEREAS, the VVAA establishes a statewide standard of knowledge and skills needed to provide effective services to crime victims; and

WHEREAS, the VVAA promotes collaboration between victim service providers, allied professionals, policymakers, educators and researchers, in addition to, providing opportunities for victim advocates to earn credentials to enhance their professional development and career opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the VVAA was designed by a Steering Committee which includes representatives from the Department of Criminal Justice Services, the University of Richmond, Virginia Commonwealth University, law enforcement, prosecution, the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, the Virginia Network for Victims and Witnesses of Crime, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Social Services, the Parole Board, the Attorney General's Office, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund, local victim assistance programs, and crime victims; and

WHEREAS, the second class of the VVAA graduates this day;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Timothy M. Kaine, do hereby recognize July 31, 2009 as **VICTIM ADVOCATE DAY** in the **COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.

Governor

Katherine K. Hanley

Secretary of the Commonwealth