

Councilman Rafael Pineyro's Proclamation Request Whereas Clause

WHEREAS, the American Association of Caregiving Youth (AACY) an organization in the U.S. dedicated solely to addressing Caregiving Youth Issues. AACY inclusively serves Caregiving Youth and their families of all ethnicities, countries of origin, income levels, gender identification, health conditions, disability, sexual orientation, marital status and religions.

WHEREAS, In 2006, the Caregiving Youth Project (CYP) became the first initiative in the United States to offer direct support to caregiving youth. Since then, CYP has expanded considerably, assisting more than 2,500 students across 35 middle and high schools in South Florida. However, limited resources have prevented an additional 22 schools from implementing a formal in-school program, even though students from those schools are enrolled in the project.

WHEREAS, The American Association of Caregiving Youth (AACY) and its founder, Connie Siskowski, have been recognized by prominent national media outlets, including CNN. In 2012, acclaimed American actor Adrien Brody introduced Connie Siskowski as one of the "Top 10 CNN Heroes" during the CNN Heroes event.

WHEREAS, Caregiving youth are individuals aged 18 or younger who play a key role in caring for a family member dealing with a chronic illness, disability, mental health issue, or age-related frailty. In the UK, these young caregivers are referred to as "Young Carers."

WHEREAS, there are over 5.4M Caregiving Youth in the United States, and it has helped many students, from Skill-Building to Lunch and Learn Sessions - Grades 6 to 12; As-well as keeping a presence to many students who homeschool and perform Home Visits by a Social Worker that links families with resources, provides school supplies, food, laptops, respite, tutoring, counseling and suction for special projects needs.

WHEREAS, Thanks to the leadership and advocacy of AACY, Florida became the first state to recognize caregiving youth in its 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), which surveyed public middle and high school students. The results revealed that 16.4% of high school students and 23.6% of middle school students—amounting to over 290,000 youth—are involved in providing care for a family member.