

OFFICE OF THE  
**DISTRICT ATTORNEY**  
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA  
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April 3, 2008

**Subject: Santa Barbara County Shows its Support for Crime Victims. City Officials, Organizations and Community Members will Participate in Local Observance of National Crime Victim's Rights Week.**

Santa Barbara County residents will join local officials in observance of the National Crime Victim's Rights Week, April 13-19. A Conference organized by the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office will be held at the Marriott Hotel in Buellton on April 17<sup>th</sup>, to honor victims, their families and those who serve them.

This year's theme is "Justice for Victims, Justice for All" said Christie Stanley. "That means there will be no justice for any of us if we don't seek greater fairness for victims of crime. It's time for our community to stand behind those harmed by crime."

Justice for victims has progressed dramatically since the 1980s. All states and the federal government have comprehensive victim's rights laws, and 33 states have constitutional amendments to protect victims' rights. Every state has a victim compensation fund, and thousands of victim service organizations help victims nationwide. Important laws, such as the federal Justice for All Act of 2004, extend protections to victims and close gaps in victim's rights.

Despite such impressive progress, however, our nation has a long way to go. Even states with strong victims' rights laws do not always honor these rights. Some states limit specific rights to victims of violence, and in almost half the states, victims of nonviolent felonies have no rights. Fortunately, this is not the case in Santa Barbara.

Injustice to victims weakens public safety. If victims are too discouraged to report crimes or serve as witnesses, our criminal justice system grinds to a halt. Every American has a stake in victims' rights.

The Santa Barbara District Attorney's Office is proud to be the leader in victim services in the County, and will continue its effort to improve these services day by day, through alliances and partnerships with other community organizations in the County.