

1 RESOLUTION NO. 2026-077

2

3 SPONSOR Executive Shapiro, Council as a Whole

4

5 DATE March 16, 2026 COMMITTEE Human Services

6

7 **A Resolution declaring April 1, 2026, as Start by Believing Day throughout the County of**  
8 **Summit, supporting the Start by Believing campaign which raises awareness of survivors of**  
9 **sexual violence, and encouraging all businesses and residents alike to show their support by**  
10 **wearing teal on April 1, 2026, for the Executive, and declaring an emergency.**

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12 WHEREAS, the County of Summit shares a critical concern for survivors of sexual  
13 violence and a desire to support their needs for justice and healing; and

14

15 WHEREAS, in 2025, law-enforcement agencies in Summit County received 318 reports  
16 of sexual assault, Cleveland Clinic Akron General Hospital’s Providing Access to Healing Center  
17 provided services to 190 patients for reported sexual assaults, Hope and Healing Survivor  
18 Resource Center provided services to 246 survivors of sexual assault, the Victim Assistance  
19 Program provided services to 108 victims of sexual violence, and the Summit County Prosecutor’s  
20 Office provided prosecutor-based victim-advocacy services to 132 adult and child survivors of  
21 sexual assault; and

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23 WHEREAS, current estimates suggest as few as 1 in 5 sexual assaults will be reported to  
24 law enforcement and less than 3 percent will result in the conviction and incarceration of the  
25 perpetrator; and

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27 WHEREAS, according to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, nearly 1 in 5  
28 women in the United States have experienced completed or attempted rape during their lifetime,  
29 and 24.8% of men in the United States experienced some form of contact sexual violence in their  
30 lifetime; and

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32 WHEREAS, sexual violence starts early, with more than 4 in 5 female rape survivors  
33 reported that they were raped before age 25 and almost half were first raped before age 18,  
34 according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and

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36 WHEREAS, the lifetime economic cost of rape is estimated at \$122,461.00 per survivor,  
37 including medical care, lost productivity from work, and criminal justice costs; and

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39 WHEREAS, research documents that victims and survivors are far more likely to disclose  
40 their sexual assault to a friend or family member, and when these loved ones respond with doubt,  
41 shame, or blame, victims suffer additional negative effects on their physical and psychological  
42 well-being, and there is a higher probability of not reporting their victimization to law  
43 enforcement; and

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45 WHEREAS, the Start by Believing public awareness campaign, a program of End Violence  
46 Against Women International and organized locally by the Prosecutor’s Office, is designed to  
47 improve the responses of friends, family members, and community professionals, so they can help  
48 victims and survivors to access supportive resources and engage the criminal justice system;

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50 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Summit, State  
51 of Ohio, that:

52

1 RESOLUTION NO. 2026-077

2 PAGE TWO

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4 SECTION 1

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6 This Resolution supports the Start by Believing public awareness campaign and April 1,  
7 2026 is hereby declared to be Start by Believing Day throughout the County of Summit, and the  
8 residents and employees of Summit County are encouraged to join in this acknowledgement by  
9 helping Turn Summit County teal.

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11 SECTION 2

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13 This Resolution is hereby declared an emergency in the interest of the health, safety and  
14 welfare of the residents and employees of the County of Summit and for the further purpose of  
15 immediately declaring April 1, 2026, as Start by Believing Day in Summit County.

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17 SECTION 3

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19 Provided this Resolution receives the affirmative vote of eight (8) members, it shall take  
20 effect immediately upon its adoption and approval by the Executive; otherwise, it shall take effect  
21 and be in force at the earliest time provided by law.

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23 SECTION 4

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25 It is found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning and relating  
26 to the adoption of this Resolution were adopted in an open meeting of this Council, and that all  
27 deliberations of this Council and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were  
28 in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements, including Section 121.22  
29 of the Ohio Revised Code.

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32 INTRODUCED March 16, 2026

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34 ADOPTED March 30, 2026

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36 Signed by:  
37 Monique Willis

38 CLERK OF COUNCIL

39

40 APPROVED March 30, 2026

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42 Signed by:  
43 Steve Shapiro

44 EXECUTIVE

45

46 ENACTED EFFECTIVE March 31, 2026

Signed by:  
Erin Dickinson

PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

Voice Vote – YES: 9 – 0: Darrow, Donofrio,  
Higham, Kacyon, Licata, McKenney, Schmidt,  
Walters, Wilhite  
Absent: Dickinson, Ford