

CRIME BILL -- DOLLARS FOR MICHIGAN, 1995 - 2000
(Revised 8/22/94)

LAW ENFORCEMENT

- * **100,000 POLICE** -- Guaranteed minimum of \$44 million -- more than 500 police officers at \$75,000 per officer.
 - ** Given Michigan's share of the population and the additional \$6.5 billion in discretionary dollars, Michigan should expect a total of about \$300 million over the next 6 years.
 - ** Of the total, up to 85% can be used to hire about 3,400 police officers. At least 15% -- \$45 million -- can be used to help pay the training, overtime and administrative costs of implementing community policing in Michigan.
- * **PRISONS & BOOT CAMPS** -- \$150 million for prison grants, including military-style boot camp prisons. An additional estimated \$150 million is possible if Michigan meets the "Truth in Sentencing" target of second-time violent offenders serving 85% of their sentences.
- * **BYRNE ENFORCEMENT GRANTS** -- \$1 billion in the Trust Fund will help continue full funding for these grants, including Michigan's \$14 million annual share.
- * **RURAL LAW ENFORCEMENT GRANTS** -- \$3.6 million for drug and crime enforcement in Michigan's rural areas.
- * **DISCRETIONARY GRANTS** -- Michigan's law enforcement agencies and courts may apply for:
 - ** \$1,000,000,000 -- Drug Court programs (treatment backed up by drug testing and certain punishment for non-violent offenders currently on probation.) Estimated \$37 million for Michigan -- enough for about 18,600 offenders over six years.
 - ** \$320,000,000 -- Criminal record systems (Brady Law), communications equipment, and DNA testing; and
 - ** \$200,000,000 -- Judges, prosecutors and public defenders (estimated \$7 million for Michigan).

PREVENTION PROGRAMS

- * **LOCAL PARTNERSHIP ACT** -- \$57 million in direct grants to cities and towns in Michigan. Wide discretion permits local governments to use the dollars for education, drug treatment, and jobs programs.
- * **VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT** -- \$28 million in grants for police, prosecutors and victims services; \$12 million in grants for shelters for battered women and their children; and Michigan can apply for a share of \$500 million in several discretionary programs.
- * **AFTERSCHOOL AND IN-SCHOOL "SAFE HAVENS" FOR AT-RISK CHILDREN** -- \$31 million for non-profit, community-based organizations in Michigan.
- * **DRUG TREATMENT IN PRISONS** -- \$11.7 million to treat up to an estimated 10,650 drug-addicted prisoners in Michigan prisons over the next 6 years.
- * **LOCAL CRIME PREVENTION BLOCK GRANT** -- \$13.6 million in direct grants to cities and towns for various programs, including:
 - ** **ANTI-GANG GRANTS** -- to give young people positive alternatives to gangs, such as academic and athletic after-school activities, mentoring programs and scout troops.
 - ** **MIDNIGHT SPORTS LEAGUES** -- to give at-risk youth nightly alternatives to the streets, and for the U.S. Olympic Committee to develop supervised sports and recreation programs in high-crime areas.
 - ** **BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS** -- to establish clubs in low-income housing communities, and to encourage police officers to live in those communities.
 - ** **TRIAD** -- for partnerships between senior citizens groups, police chiefs and sheriffs to combat crimes against elderly Americans.
 - ** **POLICE PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHILDREN** -- for partnerships between law enforcement and social service agencies to fight crimes against children, and for the creation of youth councils to combat crime.
 - ** **VISITATION CENTERS** -- for supervised centers for divorced or separated parents to visit their children in "safe havens" when there is a history or risk of physical or sexual abuse.

**** YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CENTERS -- to develop more effective education, training, research, prevention, diversion, treatment and rehabilitation programs for violent juveniles, including alternatives to school suspension and juvenile court diversion.**

**** SAFE SENIORS CORRIDORS -- to provide older Americans with enhanced protection from crime by increasing police presence and crime prevention activities by community groups.**

**** HOPE IN YOUTH -- to create Family Outreach Teams composed of youth, parents and school-parent organizers for mentoring, community organizing and peer counseling.**

*** DISCRETIONARY GRANTS -- State agencies and non-profit organizations may apply for a share of:**

**** MODEL INTENSIVE GRANTS -- \$626 million for intensive, comprehensive and flexible aid to areas, urban and rural, hardest hit by crime and violence.**

**** NATIONAL COMMUNITY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP -- \$270 million to extend lines of credit of up to \$2 million to community development corporations to provide small, low-interest loans to businesses in low-income neighborhoods.**

**** GANG RESISTANCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING ("GREAT") -- \$45 million for school-based programs to teach children to resist peer pressure and understand the negative impact of gangs and drugs.**

**** URBAN RECREATION AND AT-RISK YOUTH -- \$4.5 million to expand recreational facilities in high-crime areas.**

**Adolescent Residential Services Project and Rehabilitation
Grand Rapids, MI.**

The primary goal of this project is to implement a community-based continuum of care and intensive surveillance program for juveniles normally sentenced to out-of-home placement in the juvenile justice system as a result of substance abuse and related offenses. The focus is on community alternatives to detention, State training, schools, and long-term residential care. The return of the adolescent to the family is a significant characteristic of the project. The target population is African American, Caucasian and Hispanic youth and adolescents whose drug of choice is crack cocaine. Focus is also given to young injecting drug users.

This grant has provided for a collaborative effort between the Dakotah Family Treatment Center and Kent County Juvenile Court. The addition of a multi-disciplinary team has allowed Dakotah to successfully assist 67 percent of all crack-cocaine involved youths admitted to the program to remain in the community, living productive lives. From this effort came Project ROCK (Rehabilitation for Cocaine and Crack Kids), a specialty program for adolescent, African-American males who have been adjudicated for crack-cocaine possession and trafficking. In addition to the major treatment and surveillance components, Project ROCK staff have implemented a reading improvement program, job placement program and community service component as part of the regular course of treatment.

Contact Person: Jerry Johnson, MA, Project Director, 315 Richard Terrace, S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49506; (616) 776-7848, FAX (616) 776-7808.

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ONLINE: GETTING TO KNOW A COALITION LEADER

*Michael Walker
Director
Task Force on Violent Crime
Cleveland, Ohio*



Q. *NBC's Today Show reported in late July that violent crime is the public's primary concern, far ahead of healthcare and other issues we've heard about recently. Is this concern legitimately placed?*

A. A qualified yes. What is a real cause for concern is that we tend to focus on problems in cycles. A few years ago it was drug use, then it was the HIV crisis, then it was the healthcare crisis and now it's safety and violence. What is particularly disconcerting about this is the lack of commitment on the part of the community to long-term solutions. The short-term fixes that the public wants are just not appropriate for social policies that need long-term strategies.

The advantage to such public outcries, especially for coalitions, is that there is always a mobilization opportunity when the public attention is focused on a "crisis."

Q. *And how can that mobilization be brought about?*

A. The key issue for all coalitions is strong leadership. You have to have people willing to work with many different parties, people who aren't interested in grandstanding and taking credit for the successes. It has to be a community effort. In Cuyahoga County we have two people who have been pivotal to our success. But first let me point out that in 1980 Cleveland was considered the 5th most dangerous place in the country in terms of murder. Today it's 32nd.

And that brings me to Lou Paisley who was president of the Cleveland Bar Association in 1981. Fourteen years ago — long before it was considered a public "crisis" — he and Judge Burt Griffin saw that there was a problem and organized a coalition focused on violence. They are still co-chairs of the Task Force and still very actively involved.

Q. *And how did you personally become involved in this effort?*

A. Well, I was working with the city of Cleveland, handling citizen complaints. Since we received all sorts of complaints about crime and violence, I became involved in organizing a pilot block watch program. In fact, Cleveland was named an All American City three years in a row in part because of this block watch program, which was a real door-to-door organizing effort. I was approached by the leaders of the Task Force to continue my work with safety issues, and I've now been here nine years.

Q. *Describe some of the initiatives that your coalition has been involved in, especially as they relate to violent crime.*

A. Basically we have four missions: 1) To reduce violent crime, primarily through programs aimed at gang reduction and gang recruitment and using the media effectively; 2) Educating youth. In every city the school dropout rate and violent

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Stopping the Violence

Detroit Urban League's Male Responsibility Program

By Michael Cross, M.S.W. and Ron Foley, B.A.

STATISTIC:

In 1993 at least 272 youths were victims of gunfire in the city of Detroit. Of those 272 victims, 24 were fatally wounded.

STATISTIC:

At least 154 Detroit youth under 17 have been shot so far this year.

STATISTIC:

At least 21 Detroit youth have died resulting from gunfire this year.

Since 1987, the Detroit Urban League's Male Responsibility Program (MRP) has contributed to the rebuilding of the African-American community through assisting more than 65,000 youth and 20,000 adults. The program uses an Afrocentric value base to cultivate positive behavior and development in its participants. The staff has researched and developed innovative techniques that teach the participants applicable skills in: 1) personal and social responsibility, 2) academic excellence and achievement, 3) alcohol, tobacco and other drug use prevention, 4) African/African-American history and culture, 5) violence prevention and conflict resolution, and 6) health and nutrition. Utilizing these, knowledgeable and culturally specific MRP social development specialist provide male bonding and positive male development education, which is absent in many African-American households. In addition, they



make extensive use of the vast historical contributions Africans and African-Americans have made to human development throughout the world. By understanding and utilizing these accomplishments, all the program participants are given a strong historical foundation.

FROM VIOLENCE...TO VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The Male Responsibility Program's social development specialist (SDS) works extensively in the Detroit Public School system, churches, neighborhood community centers and correctional facilities. The unique curriculum is highly interactive and captures the attention of even the most defiant and uncooperative youth.

Most recently the Detroit Urban League initiated a "Stop The Violence" Purple Ribbon Campaign. This highly acclaimed city wide initiative has involved more than 100,000 youth and adults. Its goal is to provide violence prevention and conflict resolution skills to all residents of the city of Detroit. It provided the MRP with the opportunity to expand services to a broader audience.

A STEP FURTHER

The Male Responsibility Program was designed to reach beyond the traditional boundaries of social service programming. The staff is dedicated to the survival, development and redemption of every African-American male they meet. Many of the participants in the program require intervention in their personal, family and community life. Usually this intervention goes above and beyond the techniques and practices involved in normal social and human service provision.



MRP Director Michael Cross talking with young students at a Detroit primary school.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Andrew Friendly

8/8

Jose -

This woman was the "letter writer" that the President met in Detroit on Sat. 8/8. For some reason, he thought ppl. here were giving her the run around. Could you or whomever arranged for the photo-op get in touch with her?

Thanks.

Andrew

9/1/81
with care

President Clinton,

You hopefully already
saw this letter. I've
tried to get it to you over
& over again.

I'll be in D.C. the
week of Sept. 12, 1994,
it is my hope we will
be able to meet to discuss
these important issues.

— Linda Clark

February 15, 1994

President Clinton
White House
Washington, D.C. 20500



Dear President Clinton:

The reasons I am writing are many but the most compelling is the hope that I see in my seven year old son's eyes when he in all sincerity and naivety tells me "Mama, call President Clinton, he can help...". His advice is so simple but so important that now after nine months of struggle and determination I have reached the point where I have to ask: Not, how you can help us, but how we might be able to help you? It is with that question and that hope that I come to you to offer our story, tragic as it is, it is our daily reality and it holds much valuable information and insight in the foremost issues of Health Care Reform and Crime Control.

Maybe, this reality can demonstrate the essential and vital need for quality universal health care that is affordable for all citizens. What is currently a privilege for some is also denied to many others. Unfortunately, my family knows all too well the importance of health insurance and the frustrations and hardships when it is outside of our reach. We were forced to take the risk because we could not financially bear the cost of health coverage. When that risk became our reality it caused further destruction and devastation to an already ultimate tragic situation.

Perhaps, our tragedy can clearly illustrate the necessary and important reforms needed in our Criminal Justice System to ensure the safety and security of all Americans. On May 10, 1993 my husband, Kevin, was shot and murdered by five teenagers who had previous violent histories. Kevin was an innocent victim to this random senseless cruel crime. These defendants had already robbed the store, they stole the money, they stole the beer but they would not stop there, they shot that fatal bullet from the get a way car that stole the very breath of life from Kevin and robbed my children of their father.

Until this ruthless murder destroyed and shattered our lives we were an ordinary American family that had such strong bonds and unity. Kevin, myself and our two young children, Wesley and Kasey, were working hard and making sacrifices in order to make the "American Dream" a reality. I was a full time mother and college student returning to complete my bachelor degree after staying home to nurture our children through their early years. Even though it was financially hard to be a one income family in a two income world the importance of our children's welfare and well being was an unspoken priority over any monetary advancement.

Kevin was a small business owner employing four employees. A

*Linda
Went, Pg 1 (810) 736-6701*

residential building business that was striving and expanding because of eleven years of sacrifices, integrity and hope. Even during times of economic downturns Kevin never gave up his belief that the American Dream could be obtained with hard work, honesty and determination. It is with his strong convictions, beliefs and principles that I now find the courage to continue on and the hope that our nation can still be a nation that serves and protects its citizens.

The "American Dream" became a hideous lie for us on May 10, 1993, now not only do we have to endure the violent death of Kevin we also have to endure the added frustrations and stress of undue financial hardship. We could not afford the luxury of health or life insurance. After Kevin was shot he was taken to the hospital and four hours later he died. I was presented with the hospital medical bills that exceeded \$24,000.00. That's right, \$24,000.00 for four hours, more than our past yearly income. A yearly income that is now reduced by half that amount.

At a time when our grief is so piercing, not only do I have to struggle with my daughter's night time pleading for "just one more Daddy hug and kiss" I also must deal with debt notices and collection phone calls. Tonight, my daughter was injured and not only did I have the worry of her condition I also had to consider the cost of a hospital visit. There is a HEALTH CARE CRISIS in our nation, it is just that those with the privilege can not always see those without it. Why do criminals have medical coverage in prison and many good law abiding contributing citizens in our society do not? Are they our precious resources?

My family has overcome many challenges and burdens inflicted upon us by this cruel violent act in the last nine months. From the horrid murder of Kevin and being thrown into widowhood at 33 years old along with having to raise my children alone to the whirlwind of insensitivity of the Criminal Justice System. Along with the further secondary victimization and continual intimidation and even death threats from the defendant's supporters. Besides the vivid emotional costs, there has been significant financial costs, too. Through all this craziness, amazingly I maintained hope and that is why I offer my help to you because I have that hope.

Since my husband's murder I have initiated a statewide Citizens Petition for reform of juvenile laws and enactment of Truth in Sentencing laws. I have spoken out publicly throughout Michigan as a victim and as a citizen. The response has been overwhelming with tens of thousands of citizens supporting this effort. More and more citizens are joining together to take action on this important stand. This petition has also received National coverage on CNN News and generated responses from citizens in other states. I believe one person can make a difference, if that person has the ability to reach others, that is what is happening in MI.

Every time I hear of a murder I feel the human suffering of

the victim's family because I know this suffering all too well. Every time I receive yet another letter in the mail, again I feel the pain of other victims and I hear the many fears of those citizens that do not want to become victims. So often there will be phone calls from strangers offering encouragement to continue to speak out and strive for a safer future for all of us in society.

The courage, strong conviction and tireless determination I have in this effort is driven by a few compelling forces. The first is the total wrongness of this crime and my 7 yr. old son's questions of "WHY didn't someone do something to stop it, Mama?" when I grappled to explain their Daddy's death. The hurt and confusion in my children's tiny faces is still present there today as they ask so many difficult questions about murder, guns, death and evil. The second is in loving memory of my beloved husband Kevin, who always put people first even when he was mortally wounded by that bullet he struggled to the store door and uttered the last words he spoke to the store clerk, "Are you all right?", then he collapsed and died four hours later before we even had the chance to tell him goodbye.

I will continue to pursue this cause for criminal justice reform because I have to, no family should have to endure what my family is enduring from this injustice. Also, I must try to offer my help in the crucial issues of Health Care Reform and Crime Control. I realize the opposition you are facing in enacting these and perhaps all the sad but so real matters I have mentioned above will move the naysayers to have a fuller understanding of the needs of the citizens and view these issues from our eyes.

If telling of my family nightmare will help further the importance of affordable health care and the necessity of crime control I want to express my willingness to disclose my personal tragedy. In my home state many people have been impacted into action, involvement and participation out of their concerns, fears, urgency and human compassion for they truly see the real tragedy that statistics, facts and number can not convey.

I want to thank and commend you, President Clinton, for your keen awareness and sensitivity to the basic needs of our nation and its people. You have demonstrated your willingness to make necessary changes when it becomes obvious that changes are desperately needed. The need for these changes are something I am all too painfully aware of because of this horrid nightmare forced upon my family. It is with the hope of letting my children know that the American Dream their Dad pursued is still alive and possible for all children in our nation. Changes can be made.

President Clinton, thank you for your time, patience and willingness to read our daily reality. Now let me ask, How can I offer my assistance to you in your righteous endeavors. I know, no one can do everything but everyone can do something. Where can I help? Please let me know.

*Linda
P. 3 (810) 736-6701*

My letter to you is only a brief synopsis of the many concrete effects, aspects and information I have to offer in assistance. I only pray that this letter reached you and I have that opportunity and privelege.

Respectfully and sincerely,

Linda Roster Clark
Linda Roster Clark, (810) 736-6701
1302 N. Vassar Road
Flint, MI 48506



Clark

Linda Clark stops at grave of her husband, Kevin M. Clark, after a hearing before House Judicial Committee. The marker was crafted by her daughter, Kasey.



One year of playing a delicate balancing act between grieving widow, mother and crime victim advocate



Mom with mission leads multiple lives since dad's murder

By Jim Larkin

JOURNAL POLITICAL WRITER

It's 7:45 a.m. and Kasey Clark, 5, is at her kitchen table waiting for the school bus to arrive, passing the time by drawing a heart with curly designs inside its border.

She writes "I love you ..., Kasey Clark" above it but does not address it to anyone.

No salutation is needed. Several nights earlier, Kasey fell asleep with her slain father's picture wrapped in her arms. And the same heart, this one wooden and also made by Kasey, with the same words scrawled, is posted near her father's grave.

Tuesday marks the first anniversary of the death of Kevin M. Clark, who was shot and killed when he happened upon the robbery of a Genesee Township convenience store by five teen-agers.

For his widow, Linda Roster Clark, it has been a year of mending and of uncertainty over how much to shelter her children. And it has been a year that includes a clear conviction about her drive to enact "Truth in Sentencing" laws.

Please see **MISSION, A14**



Above: Linda Clark holds daughter Kasey, 5, to get a closer look at a bird's nest in their back yard. **Left:** Clark testifies about "Truth in Sentencing" bill pending before the House.

JOURNAL PHOTOS
BY
JACK GRUBER

MISSION

Continued from A1

It's been a year of traveling the state and country and back and forth to Lansing, of coming home in time to turn off her continuing drive for criminal justice reform and turn her attention to her children: Kasey and Wesley. It has been a year of delicately balancing her roles as grieving widow, mother and crime victim advocate.

One of those roles will come to fruition later this month, when a "Truth in Sentencing" bill, which languished in the Legislature for 1½ years before Clark's involvement, is likely to become law.

She also continues to work on the other roles.

"I don't want his (Kevin's) memory to fade. I have to keep talking about him so that his memory can stay alive for them," Clark said. "But they're just kids and they also need their childhood. So much of their life was already changed by the violence..."

"I've tried to give them a good sense that even though Daddy died, changes can be made for other families."

Wesley Clark proudly displays the pictures of his mother delivering to Gov. John M. Engler petitions containing 38,000 names of people supporting "Truth in Sentencing" laws. He points to one that, he says he was in, even though his tiny body is hidden by adults shaking Engler's hands.

"I kept saying 'Governor, Engler, Governor Engler,' but he didn't pay attention, so finally after the third or fourth time I said 'Hey, John!'" Wesley said.

"We're going to work on another bill after this," he said. "They're not learning anything in prison. All they do is watch TV."

Wesley, says his mother, is the serious Clark.

While his sister expresses her feelings and talks about missing her dad, Wesley speaks of memories of their times together but guards his innermost feelings, Clark said.

She talks to her children about their father when they express a need to talk. She has kept newspaper clippings of her drive for criminal reform and videos of her TV appearances, but shows them to the children only when they have specifically asked.

"I take my cue from them. They only know what they ask. They know what they're ready to handle," Clark said.

Kasey and Wesley have helped stuff envelopes with petitions, but accompanied their mother to Lansing for the first time just two months ago. She has refused reporters' requests to meet with them, and even now the reporter's and photographer's purpose is not revealed, only their names.

"Why is he taking all these pictures?" Kasey asked.

"Because that's his job," Clark answered.

"They know what their mother is attempting to accomplish but not the scope of her work."

They are not fully aware of the significance of their mom having discussed crime legislation with Vice President Al Gore and Attorney General Janet Reno in Washington, D.C.; on "The Today Show" in New York City; on CNN News; on a USA Today section front; in state House and state Senate committee meetings.

And for Clark that is as it should be. Exposure and self-attention is not what she seeks. Reform, in the memory of her husband, is what she reaches for at a pace that would tire most.

Wesley Clark stepped onto the school bus at about 8 a.m. and now Linda Clark must hurry.

She still has to take Kasey to her sister's house so Kasey can later be driven to preschool. Then she has to testify at a 9 a.m. hearing at the House Judicial Committee in Lansing, about one hour from her Richfield Township home.

She is used to having to relive the memory of her husband's violent death so legislators know the impact of laws — or the lack of them.

"I build an insulation around me so I can go on TV or talk to legislators without breaking down," Clark said. "But I know it has to be done."

So Clark speeds along I-69, unknowingly passing her mother and father along the way. Matt and Annamae Roster finally catch up to her just as she is entering the state Capitol building.

Clark walks steadily toward committee chambers, notebook filled with information in one hand, her other hand grasping a cart that carries the volumes of "Truth in Sentencing" petitions.

"She's hard to keep up with, if she's driving or walking," Annamae Roster said.

Clark's sister, Kayann Lackey, knows the reason.

"You can look in her eyes and you can see the pain. But we don't know how to handle anger. We're not angry people," Lackey said. "The energy is the anger and the rage coming out."

But it comes out in a controlled manner. When state Rep. David M. Gubow, D-Huntington Woods, a House Judiciary Committee member, questioned whether "Truth in Sentencing" merely is intended to placate crime victims and not for meaningful reform, Clark did not respond.

She also admits there are cases other than her own that provide a far better example of the need for truth in sentencing. Two of the five teen-agers charged in her husband's death

received life sentences, and the three others were sentenced to terms ranging from eight to 15 year and 25 to 50 years.

But she is the most vocal and that in itself has brought criticism from those who say Clark is being exploited for political gain.

"We ought not to be exploiting her grief for political purposes, and that's clearly what's going on," said Patrick Clark (no relation), associate director of the Michigan Council on Crime & Delinquency. "I think it's despicable."

Linda Clark shrugs off such criticism. She said she sought legislative support for reform and was not recruited. She sees "Truth in Sentencing" as an important foundation but only one block of the criminal reforms she'll seek.

Her goal is not to alienate others but to get everyone to work together toward making streets safer.

"A lot of crime victims have a lot of anger, and I do have a lot of frustration working within the bureaucracy of government," Clark said. "But I look at them (legislators) as people just like us. They don't have all the solutions. Neither do I. We all need to work together."

Her strategy worked. The "Truth in Sentencing" bill was unanimously reported out of committee to the full House. Clark, another victory in hand, drives home.

Clark stops at Kevin's gravesite en route home, something she usually does after taking another step toward reform.

She stops at the post office to pick up a cartful of mail from people across the country requesting national "Truth in Sentencing" petitions: from Atlanta to Conshohocken, Pa., Houston to Minot, N.D.

Then it's back to pick up Ka-

sey and refocus on her children. The notebook, petitions and mail are put away. The telephone answering machine goes on.

"It's not fair when they come home to have mom on the phone. This is their time," Clark said. "I have to step back from it at times because otherwise it can be overwhelming. I try to keep my kids the top priority."

That means playing soccer with Kasey or baseball with Wesley. It means long walks in the woods behind their home where more memories of Kevin are stirred: His deer blind still stands as does his bow and arrow perch in a tree.

There's dinner, soccer practice for Kasey at 6 p.m. and in upcoming months baseball practice for Wesley. Bedtime comes at 8:30 p.m., with Mom then remaining up until midnight stuffing envelopes, writing speeches, returning telephone calls.

Clark is not alone in her efforts to balance her crime reform work and motherhood, nor in trying to pick up the pieces from a murder that shattered many lives.

Lackey often accompanies her sister on trips to Lansing and Washington, D.C. and baby-sits for the children when she doesn't. She is so deeply involved that she expects to take a year's absence from her job as a Kearsley School District teacher.

"I can't go back next year. I love my job but ... it's hard for me to see kids and their fathers up there, the same age as Kasey and Wesley," Lackey said. "I'm confused about it. Because of this we've all changed."

Rusty, Kevin's brother, lost his best friend, brother and employ-

er. He worked for Kevin's home construction business and is still not certain how much he wants to get back into the field.

Both sets of parents — the Rosters and Russ and Jeanne

Clark — also take turns baby-sitting when Clark cannot be with her children and have been supportive of her crime reform efforts.

Jeanne Clark said that today will be an especially difficult day for her. She spent last Mother's Day with Kevin, his wife and children, and her present was a rose-bush Kevin was supposed to have planted on the night he died.

She expected the call she got that night to be him saying he was on his way to her home. Instead, it was news of his murder.

"It knocks the blocks out from under you," said Jeanne Clark, who retired as Genesee County Extension home economist after Kevin's death.

"What Linda has done since has been amazing. She was always the quiet one, and Kevin was the talker. But she has blossomed into a most eloquent speaker."

"When she started all this, everybody would say, 'Well yeah, Linda, you do that' and pat her on the head. Now they're calling back and saying they are sorry but they never thought she could do it."

Neither, in fact, did Linda Clark. She said her former work as a paralegal helped her do the necessary research to prove her points but said she still knows little about politics and the network of media decision makers she has had to rely on to get her message out.

Determination and perseverance, she said, were the keys.

It has, however, left little time for herself. She said she does not now have the motivation to complete the college degree she was close to earning when Kevin died. And she looks puzzled when asked what she does for fun.

"I haven't gotten to that point. This is my life without Kevin," Clark said. "But even when he was alive we weren't the type to hire a babysitter and go out on

weekends. If we went somewhere we took the kids with us."

Although both of her children have their difficult times, they appear to have adjusted as well as possible to their father's death, family members said. Still, Clark worries about how their pain will surface in the future and the effect of their world being turned upside down on their adult lives.

Nighttime, she said, is particularly hard on the children. It was then that Kevin often tucked them into bed and read stories. It is then that she wishes he was here to sing them Billy Joel's "Lullabye":

*Goodnight, my angel, it's time to dream
And dream how wonderful your life will be
Some day your child may cry
And if you sing this lullabye
Then in your heart there will al-
ways be a part of me.
Someday, we'll all be gone,
But lullabies go on and on.
They never die.
That's how you and I will be.*

'Truth in Sentencing'

'Truth in Sentencing' legislation, which has passed the state Senate and is now before the House, would:

- Require that criminals convicted of assault crimes serve at least their minimum sentences.
- Eliminate 'good time' reductions in minimum sentences.
- Allow disciplinary time to be added to sentences of convicts who misbehave in prison.



JOURNAL PHOTO/JACK GRUBER

After a day at the Capitol promoting 'Truth in Sentencing' law, Linda Clark picks up her daughter, Kasey, and looks over the day's work from preschool.

Woman's crusade pays off

By Catherine Kaza
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Less than 14 months ago, Linda Clark was fresh with grief, after her husband was murdered when he stumbled upon a Genesee Township convenience store robbery by five teen-agers.

On Friday, the Richfield Township woman and her two children witnessed the culmination of months of work, as Clark stood among a distinguished bevy of local and state officials who watched Gov. John Engler sign two bills requiring criminals convicted of violent crimes to serve the minimum time for which they are sentenced.

"We're sending a message to violent criminals, that we're mad as hell and we're not going to take it anymore," Engler told a crowd of 100 packed into Genesee County Circuit Court Judge Robert M. Ransom's courtroom Friday afternoon.

The bills also would eliminate "good time" sentence reductions, establish "bad time" sentence increases for prisoners who misbehave and require that minimum sentences be served in a secure facility.

The "truth-in-sentencing" laws were proposed by state Sen. William Van Regenmorter, R-Jenison, in 1991.

But officials credit Clark for



JOURNAL PHOTO/TRAVIS HEYING

Linda Clark and Gov. John Engler in Flint Friday.

collecting 40,000 signatures in a petition drive, pushing the idea through the Legislature.

The laws won't take effect until sentencing guidelines are revamped.

"It's been a long, hard effort, but it has a positive outcome for all of us," said Clark, who is 34. "I think the most important thing is that citizens can and did make a difference."

Clark said the petition drive was done in memory of her 37-year-old husband, who always put others first. He was killed on May 10, 1993.

She still remembers how the teens who eventually were convicted in the murder of her husband laughed at her during their trials.

"It is our hope that this will be

the beginning of a shift in attitude," Clark told the crowd, who gave her a standing ovation.

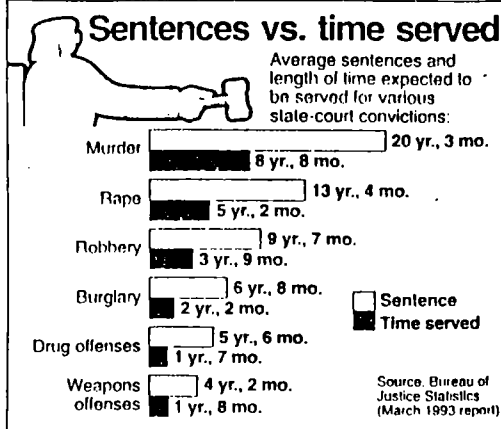
"Criminals in Michigan will no longer find it so easy to laugh at the criminal justice system," she said. "We're protecting our basic right to safety."

Now that "truth in sentencing" is behind her, Clark would like to devote her attention to juvenile law reform, effective rehabilitation in jails and early childhood intervention.

Her children, Kasey and Wesley, continue to motivate her work to help reform criminal laws, Clark said.

"It's important for them to see that changes can be made," said Clark. "They've been a big part of these changes."

THE NATION



In Mich., a widow fights back

By Debbie Howlett
USA TODAY

FLINT, Mich. — If it weren't for anger, Linda Clark might not feel anything at all.

Her range of emotion is as constricted as her throat was the night she learned her husband, Kevin, 37, had been murdered when he stumbled upon a convenience store robbery.

Clark is stoic when she talks about the five teens involved. Two are serving life sentences. The other three, serving shorter sentences, she says, "got away with murder."

What enrages her most is that none of the three is likely to serve his full sentence under Michigan's "good-time" policy, which can lop 20% off a well-behaved inmate's sentence.

"They should not be given a second chance," she says. "Kevin wasn't given a second chance. He wasn't even given a second thought."

In the 11 months since the killing, she has channeled her rage into a petition drive that has netted 38,000 signatures calling for sentencing reform.

Today, the Michigan Legislature is expected to answer Clark's call. A Senate committee likely will OK a controversial truth in sentencing law that would outlaw good time.

The bill adds "bad time" — days tacked on the sentence of inmates who misbehave.

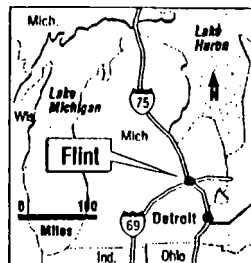
Indiana is the only other state considering such a bill.

Critics say the law is mainly punitive and too costly. Doing away with good time will also make it tougher to control inmates, some experts suggest.

But state Sen. William Van Regenmorter, a Republican, says the bill is important victims' rights legislation.

"Knowing how long a violent prisoner is going to be incarcerated is reassuring, especially to the victim," he says.

In the U.S. House, Rep. Jim



USA TODAY

Chapman, D-Texas, hopes to put the issue on the national agenda by amending his bill to overall crime legislation. His bill provides incentive money to states to adopt such laws.

"A lot of people say, 'Why are you doing this?'" Clark says. "The question I ask is, 'How did this happen?' We as a society need to regain control."

Kevin Clark, who owned a small construction company, was cut down by a .380-caliber bullet on a warm night in May.

He had stopped at Mike's Market on his way home from work to buy treats for his two children. Five teens were fleeing the store they had just robbed of beer and \$300.

Clark moved to get a look at their car's license plates. The teens panicked. Shouts of "pop him" were reported. A shot rang out. The car sped off.

"I thought I was untouchable by such a horrendous crime," says Linda Clark, a homemaker raising their children on Social Security. "Nobody is immune."

Aided by one of the young men's uncle, police caught the teens within 36 hours.

Two agreed to testify against the others. One, Lawrence White, 15, got eight to 15 years. The other, Freddie Griffin, 17, got 15 to 30 years.

Clark has criticized the plea agreements. But prosecutor Arthur Busch says the testimony was necessary to ensure the



Photos by Jon Freilich, AP

'HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?': Linda Clark's husband, Kevin, 37, was slain when he stumbled upon a convenience store robbery.

“
They should not be given a second chance. Kevin wasn't given a second chance. He wasn't even given a second thought.
”

— Linda Clark



'NOBODY IMMUNE': Linda and Kevin Clark with their kids, Wesley, 7, left, and Kasey, 5. Linda says her children's "security was shattered."

other three were convicted.

► The shooter, Victor Polk, 17, who police say has no criminal record, was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

► Kevin Griffin, 17, a cousin of Freddie Griffin, was sentenced to 25 to 50 years.

► Stanley Adams, 17, is serving life without parole — not for the Clark murder but for the slaying of a rival drug dealer two weeks before the robbery. He got life with parole for the Clark killing.

Linda Clark has not one iota of compassion for the young men, who say they never meant to shoot Kevin Clark, only to scare him.

Carolyn Griffin, whose son, Freddie, testified against his friends, says she doesn't understand why Clark is so intent on keeping her son off the streets for the rest of his life.

"They weren't trying to hurt nobody. They made a mistake," she says.

She also wonders about

Polk, whom she has known since he was a child. He won't have the chance to rear his 13-month-old son: "That boy has lost his daddy," Griffin says.

Nothing about the murder angers Clark more than the thought of her own children — Wesley, 7, and Kasey, 5 — growing up without a father.

"I try to tell them the world is a safe place," she says. "Their security was shattered. ... I have to do something so they know they can be safe."



USA TODAY • WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 1994 • 3A

DO CRIME, DO TIME: Michigan's

Senate passed two "truth in sentencing" bills to require that criminals serve at least the minimum sentence for serious crimes and add "bad time" for misbehavior. Watching as the bills passed unanimously: Linda Clark, who gathered 34,000 signatures promoting the idea after robbers killed her husband, Kevin, 37, when he stopped at a neighborhood store to buy candy for his two children. "I'm glad we're getting accountability back into the system. We never should have lost it," she said. Gov. John Engler is likely to sign the bills, says state Sen. William Van Regenmorter, R-Jenison, the bills' sponsor.



AP

CLARK: 'Getting accountability back'

— Jennifer Kauss

Anti-crime crusader captures first victory with sentencing bills

By Jim Larkin
JOURNAL POLITICAL WRITER

Last week's unanimous state House passage of "truth-in-sentencing" bills means a yearlong battle by Linda Roster Clark to have the legislation enacted should come to an end later this month.

But don't expect Clark to stop her anti-crime drive when Gov. John M. Engler signs the bills into law.

Next up for the Richfield Township resident is a legislative push to rid prisons of weightlifting equipment and other frills provided to inmates and make first-time juvenile offenders more accountable for their actions.

"I plan to promote legislation on both at the same time," Clark said. "Our prisons should be geared more toward punishment than luxury. Why should we provide prisoners with weightlifting equipment so they can be physically stronger when they get out?"

"We also have to make sure there's more accountability for juveniles on their first offense, so they don't go on to more serious offenses."

Clark's husband, Kevin, was killed in May 1993 when he happened upon the robbery of a Genesee Township convenience store by five teen-agers.

Clark said the truth-in-sentencing bills, which will ensure that convicted criminals serve their minimum sentence, only provides the foundation for the more extensive criminal reform

she will pursue.

Clark's goals are still one year from becoming reality, said state Sen. William Van Regenmorter, R-Hudsonville, sponsor of the bills.

Van Regenmorter said he expects the Senate to approve the truth-in-sentencing amendments Tuesday and Engler to sign the bills into law by the end of June.

But they are tied to yet-to-be approved legislation establishing a commission to set state sentencing guidelines. After the Legislature authorizes the commission — composed of judges, prosecutors, lawyers and victims — it likely will take a year for the group to finish its task.

"I think what will happen is a clear prioritization of our prison space so our most dangerous people will serve the longest time in prison," Van Regenmorter said.

"Truth-in-sentencing will result in some increase in the number of people in our prisons, but not a large one, and the increase will be those who are the most violent. Which is as it should be," he said.

Not everyone, however, shares that opinion. State Sen. Jack Welborn, R-Kalamazoo, said the sentencing guidelines are likely to be tied to prison capacity, which could mean more lenient sentencing guidelines in some cases.

"The truth-in-sentencing legislation will reduce the number of inmates eligible for alternative sentencing, thereby increasing

Please see **CRUSADER, C2**

CRUSADER

Continued from C1

the number of non-violent criminals in prison," Welborn said.

"A majority ... approved truth-in-sentencing before they even knew what the sentencing guidelines would be. In other words, they put fancy gift-wrapping on an empty package."

Clark, however, said she will follow the commission's actions to make sure the sentencing guidelines for violent offenders are stronger.

"I don't foresee a problem," Clark said. "If anything, we want to see them (sentences) increased."

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 1994

SECOND FRONT PAGE

THE FLINT JOURNAL

Senate passes jail-time reform

Area widow wins 'truth in sentencing'

FROM JOURNAL LANSING BUREAU, AP
REPORTS

Lansing — If you do the crime, you will do the time. That is the message of legislation on its way to Gov. John M. Engler.

The Senate gave final legislative approval Tuesday to "truth in sentencing" bills that would force criminals to serve at least their minimum sentence for violent or serious crimes.

The bills would eliminate "good time" reductions in prisoners' minimum sentences, require "bad time" to be imposed on those who misbehave and require that minimum sentences be served in a secure facility.

Affected by the legislation are those convicted of murder, negligent homicide, rape, armed robbery and breaking and entering. Misdemeanor offenses are not included.

The legislation is linked to a revision in sentencing guidelines, which is not yet completed. Both must be approved before either can take effect.

"I'm glad we're getting accountability back into the system. We never should have lost it," said Linda Clark.

Her husband, Kevin Clark of Genesee County's Richfield Township, was shot to death by fleeing robbers May 10, 1993. The 37-year-old father had stopped at a neighborhood store to buy candy for his two children.

The slaying spurred Clark to begin collecting signatures on petitions urging lawmakers to make sure criminals stay behind bars for at least their minimum sentences.

Clark watched from the Senate gallery as the chamber passed the two bills, 30-0 and 33-0. At one point, the senators stopped work to give her a round of applause.

"It shows the citizens make a difference," she said. "Truth in sentencing is the strong foundation for other needed reforms."

"I'm glad for the bipartisan support and the cooperation across the board. You can sense the attitude starting to shift and change. The citizens can and did make a difference here."

She said she would work on related issues, including revamped sentencing guidelines and corrections issues.

By early this spring, she had collected more than 34,000 signatures. She said many people wrote to her to express their outrage that some criminals went free long before their minimum sentences were done.

"This finally will start to restore some integrity to the system," said Sen. William Van Regenmorter, R-Jenison and the sponsor of the bills. "People had no idea when a person was going to be released."

Journal political writer Jim Larkin contributed to this report.

LOCAL NEWS

Genesee Twp. widow gets crime-victim award

By Thomas Nord
JOURNAL LANSING BUREAU

Lansing — Until she became a victim herself, Linda Clark of Genesee Township said, she rarely gave crime issues much thought.

But now, "each time I meet a crime victim, I feel their pain," said Clark. Her husband, Kevin, was killed May 10, 1993, during a convenience store robbery.

With her son Wesley, 7, and daughter Kasey, 5, at her side, Clark on Wednesday accepted the Outstanding Victim Advocate of the Year award from Sen. William Van Regenmorter, R-Jenison, for her efforts in speaking out against violence.

"I knew within a few weeks (of the murder) that I was going to do something," Clark said. "I wanted to direct that anger into something positive."

Clark's award came as dozens of people gathered outside the Capitol for a vigil in memory of victims of violence.

Held to commemorate National Crime Victims Week, the event gave victims' rights organizations from around Michigan a chance to recognize how far they have come over the years and where they have to go.

Among those at the Capitol was Marlene Piasecki, whose husband, Joseph, the

superintendent for Chelsea schools, was shot and killed in his office Dec. 16.

For months after her husband's murder, Piasecki said she kept her emotions to herself, allowing others to carry the torch for crime victims' rights.

But on Tuesday, Piasecki broke her silence when she testified before the state House Judiciary Committee, which is considering truth-in-sentencing legislation.

Passed last week by the Senate, the bill eliminates "good time" credits for prison inmates and forces them to serve their minimum sentence.

Supreme Court Justice Patricia Boyle supported victims' rights.

"Victims are no longer alone, they are no longer helpless and they are no longer excluded from the process," Boyle said. "A just government cannot ignore human suffering in the development of public policy."

Prosecutors are now required to keep victims posted of every step of the criminal justice process, including getting their approval before allowing a plea bargain.

Victims now have the right to speak at sentencing hearings, while mandatory fees paid by convicted criminals help pay victims' rights advocates on each county prosecutor's staff.



JOURNAL PHOTO SERVICE/ROBIN L. BUCKSON

Linda Clark receives an award as her children Kasey (center), 5, and Wesley, 7, look on.

Linda Clark

President Clinton

(Please take just 10 minutes
to read this information yourself)