

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

21-257

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

September 20, 2016

To declare the month of September 2016 as “Sickle Cell Awareness Month” in the District of Columbia and to recognize the need to address the problem of Sickle Cell Disease at both national and local levels.

WHEREAS, Sickle Cell Month was officially recognized in 1983 when the House of Representatives unanimously passed the resolution, introduced by the Congressional Black Caucus, asking President Reagan to designate September as "National Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month";

WHEREAS, Sickle Cell Disease (“SCD”) results in an abnormality in the oxygen-carrying protein haemoglobin found in red blood cells;

WHEREAS, SCD is the most common genetic blood disease in the United States, affecting between 90,000 and 100,000 Americans;

WHEREAS, about 2.5 million people in the United States have sickle cell trait, which occurs when a person inherits one copy of the globin gene;

WHEREAS, SCD is usually diagnosed at birth via blood test during routine newborn screenings;

WHEREAS, currently, all 50 states in the U.S. require newborn screening programs for SCD;

WHEREAS, SCD can lead to recurrent and chronic pain, lung disease, leg ulcers, and other complications, several of which have a high mortality rate;

WHEREAS, impaired blood flow associated with SCD can potentially cause damage to most organ systems of the body, including the kidneys, livers, spleen, and eyes;

ENROLLED ORIGINAL

WHEREAS, SCD occurs in about one out of every 365 Black or African-American births, and about one out of every 16,300 Hispanic-American births;

WHEREAS, there are approximately 2,000 people living in the District of Columbia with SCD, and 118,000 with the sickle cell trait, according to the Center for Sickle Cell at Howard University;

WHEREAS, Wards 5, 6, 7, and 8 provide approximately 65% of the total number of SCD patient services in the District;

WHEREAS, because children with SCD are at increased risk of infection and other health complications, early diagnosis and treatment to prevent problems is critical;

WHEREAS, the annual cost of medical care in the United States for individuals who suffer from SCD exceeds \$1.1 billion; and

WHEREAS, the cure for SCD, only recently discovered, involves a stem cell transplantation from a healthy, tissue-matched donor, eliminating the need for chemotherapy to prepare the patient to receive the transplanted cells and offering the prospect of a disease-free life for tens of thousands of suffering adults.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Sickle Cell Awareness Recognition Resolution of 2016”.

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia declares the month of September 2016 as “Sickle Cell Awareness Month” in the District of Columbia and urges citizens to reflect on the children and adults whose lives, education, and careers have been affected by Sickle Cell Disease.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.