February 21, 2018 - Introduced by Representatives PETRYK and KOLSTE. Referred to Committee on Rules.

Relating to: declaring August as Shingles Awareness and Improvement Month.

Whereas, herpes zoster (shingles) is a disease caused by the same virus (zoster) that causes chicken pox; therefore, any individual who has contracted chicken pox is at risk for shingles (approximately 98 percent of U.S. adults); and

Whereas, nearly one in three people in the United States will contract shingles in their lifetime, corresponding to an estimated one million people annually; and

Whereas, risk of shingles increases with age, with nearly half of those affected are over 60 years and half of people living until 85 years of age will develop shingles; and

Whereas, shingles is a viral infection that causes a painful rash that can be severe along with other symptoms including long-term nerve pain, fever, headache, chills, upset stomach, muscle weakness, skin infection, scarring, decrease or loss of vision or hearing; and

Whereas, as much as 20 percent of adults who have contracted shingles will develop postherpetic neuralgia, a debilitating complication of shingles that causes
severe pain, that may interfere with sleep and recreational activities, and be
associated with clinical depression; and

Whereas, vaccines have reduced the burden of widespread and often fatal
diseases, enabling individuals to lead longer and healthier lives while reducing
health care costs; and

Whereas, although much attention has been paid to the importance of
childhood vaccinations, there is a general lack of awareness of adult-recommended
vaccines, and a misperception that immunizations are unnecessary for healthy
adults; and

Whereas, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommend that
healthy adults 50 years and older be vaccinated against shingles to prevent shingles
and shingles-related complications; and

Whereas, despite the recommendations of CDC officials and other experts that
all healthy adults be vaccinated against shingles, as of 2015 only 30 percent of
eligible adults had received the shingles vaccine; and

Whereas, the annual economic burden of shingles in American adults is
estimated to be between $782 million and $5.0 billion; and

Whereas, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) has stated that one of the six causes
of excess costs in the U.S. healthcare system is missed prevention opportunities; and

Whereas, millions of American adults go without routine and recommended
vaccinations because our medical system is not set up to ensure that adults receive
regular preventive healthcare; and

Whereas, as the month of August is observed as National Immunization
Awareness Month, residents of Wisconsin should be encouraged to speak with their
healthcare provider to ensure that they have been properly vaccinated against
shingles according to current CDC and ACIP recommendations; now, therefore, be
it

Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That the Wisconsin
State Legislature recognizes August as “Shingles Awareness and Improvement
Month” in Wisconsin to increase public awareness of the importance of adults
receiving vaccines against shingles, and to promote outreach and education efforts
concerning adult vaccination; and, be it further

Resolved, That the Department of Health Services is encouraged to promote
Shingles Awareness and Improvement Month, including urging health care
practitioners to discuss vaccines for shingles with adult patients and adopting
appropriate programs and initiatives to raise public awareness of the importance of
adult vaccination; and, be it further

Resolved, That the Department of Health Services is encouraged to distribute
educational resources on shingles and shingles vaccination, to educate the residents
of Wisconsin that shingles is a vaccine-preventable diseases.

(END)