2021 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 82


Relating to: recognizing September as National Sickle Cell Awareness Month.

Whereas, more than 100,000 people in the United States and approximately 800 Wisconsinites are battling sickle cell disease; and

Whereas sickle cell disease almost exclusively affects communities of color, affecting 1 in 365 newborn African American infants and 1 in 16,300 newborn Hispanic American infants, and can be found in individuals of Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Asian, and Indian origin; and

Whereas, more than 3,000,000 individuals in the United States have the sickle cell trait, and 1 in 13 African Americans carries the trait; and

Whereas, there is a 1 in 4 chance that a child born to parents who both have the sickle cell trait will have the disease; and

Whereas, sickle cell disease is an inherited, debilitating red blood cell disorder in which red blood cells are abnormally shaped, which restricts the flow in blood vessels and limits oxygen delivery to the body’s tissues; and
Whereas, sickle cell disease often result in bouts of severe pain, anemia, stroke, organ damage, and early death; and

Whereas, as the most common inherited blood disorder in the United States, sickle cell disease is passed on to children from parents through genes; and

Whereas, sickle cell disease patients often experience significant barriers and discrimination when seeking and accessing lifesaving treatments; and

Whereas, since the 1970s, there have been limited advances in the care and treatment of the disease. With no universal cure for sickle cell disease, many patients rely on frequent blood transfusions to manage their symptoms. Many of these transfusions require up to 10 units of blood every month, which requires up to 20 donors for one patient; and

Whereas, blood centers operating in the state of Wisconsin, including American Red Cross, Blood Center of Northcentral Wisconsin, The Community Blood Center, Rock River Valley Blood Center, and Versiti Blood Center of Wisconsin, play a critical role in the treatment of sickle cell disease by supplying lifesaving blood for transfusions; and

Whereas, Wisconsin health care providers at organizations such as Froedtert and the Medical College of Wisconsin Froedtert Hospital, Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, and Versiti provide world-class care to sickle cell patients across the state; and

Whereas, Wisconsin researchers at organizations such as the Medical College of Wisconsin, Marquette University, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison conduct research on treatments and psychosocial interventions to ease the burden of sickle cell disease on those affected; and
Whereas, Wisconsin representatives of professional organizations such as the American Society of Hematology (ASH) and the International Association of Sickle Cell Nurses and Professional Associates (IASCNAPA) work to improve the outcomes for individuals living with sickle cell disease through advocacy, care, education, and research; and

Whereas, the recognition of National Sickle Cell Awareness Month as well as health care delivery services for individuals living with sickle cell disease can support the transition for adolescents from pediatric to adult health care to improve patient health outcomes and save lives; and

Whereas, lack of preventative research investment and funding results in a lack of both short- and long-term sickle cell patient outcomes in overall health and well-being; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That the members of the Wisconsin Legislature join in recognizing September as National Sickle Cell Awareness Month; and, be it further

Resolved, That the members of the Wisconsin Legislature encourage the people of Wisconsin to hold appropriate programs, events, and activities during National Sickle Cell Awareness Month to raise public awareness of preventative care programs, treatments, and other patient services for those living with sickle cell disease.

(END)