

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY AUGUST 21, 2012

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 44

Introduced by Assembly Member Carter
(Principal coauthors: Assembly Members Bradford, Davis, Hall,
Mitchell, and Swanson)
(Principal coauthors: Senators Price and Wright)

August 6, 2012

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 44—Relative to Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 44, as amended, Carter. Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month

This measure would recognize the month of September-~~2013~~ 2012, and each September thereafter, as Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month in California, and would urge the President and the Congress of the United States to restore and continue funding for sickle cell anemia centers and research to make sickle cell anemia and other genetic hemoglobin disorders a public health priority.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Sickle cell anemia and sickle cell disease, used
- 2 interchangeably, refer to a group of inherited disorders that affect
- 3 the red blood cells; and
- 4 WHEREAS, Sickle cell anemia is a disease in which a person's
- 5 body produces abnormally shaped red blood cells that resemble a
- 6 crescent or sickle, and which do not last as long as normal; round
- 7 red blood cells, which leads to anemia. The sickle cells also get

1 stuck in blood vessels and block blood flow, which can cause pain
2 and organ damage; and

3 WHEREAS, Sickle cell anemia is a genetic disorder where
4 individuals with the disease are born with two sickle cell genes,
5 each inherited from one parent. An individual with only one sickle
6 cell gene has a “sickle cell trait,” which occurs in one out of every
7 12 African Americans and in one out of every 100 Latinos in the
8 United States; and

9 WHEREAS, It is estimated that more than 70,000 Americans
10 have sickle cell anemia. Sickle cell anemia occurs in one out of
11 every ~~400~~ 500 African American births and in one out of every
12 36,000 Latino births; and

13 WHEREAS, Sickle cell anemia can be a life-threatening
14 condition, and access to comprehensive care can be limited by
15 social, economic, cultural, and geographic barriers; and

16 WHEREAS, The average cost of hospitalization for sickle cell
17 anemia in 2004 was \$6,223, for more than 84,000 hospital
18 admissions that year. Total hospitalization costs for individuals
19 with sickle cell anemia equaled \$488,000,000, of which 65 percent
20 were covered by Medicaid funds; and

21 WHEREAS, Individuals living with sickle cell anemia encounter
22 barriers to obtaining quality care and improving their quality of
23 life. These barriers include limitations in geographic access to
24 comprehensive care, the varied use of effective treatments, the
25 high reliance on emergency departments and on public health
26 programs, and the limited number of health care providers with
27 knowledge and experience to manage and treat sickle cell ~~anemia~~.
28 *anemia; and*

29 WHEREAS, The Sickle Cell Anemia Control Act was signed
30 into law in 1972 by President Richard Nixon after pledging that
31 his administration would “reverse the record of neglect on the
32 dreaded disease” by increasing funding for and expanding sickle
33 cell anemia-related programs, including the development of
34 comprehensive sickle cell anemia centers; and

35 WHEREAS, In 1975, the Sickle Cell Disease Association of
36 America, Inc. and its member organizations began conducting
37 monthlong events in September to call attention to sickle cell
38 anemia and the need to address the problem at national and local
39 levels, and chose September as National Sickle Cell Awareness
40 Month in order for the public to reflect on the children and adults

1 whose lives, education, and careers have been affected by this
2 disease; and

3 WHEREAS, In 2003, the Sickle Cell Treatment Act was signed
4 into law; and

5 WHEREAS, The effort to officially recognize Sickle Cell
6 Anemia Awareness Month succeeded at the federal level in 1983
7 when the United States House of Representatives unanimously
8 passed, and President Ronald Reagan signed, the first resolution
9 introduced by the Congressional Black Caucus that recognized
10 September as National Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month;
11 now, therefore, be it

12 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*
13 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature recognizes September
14 ~~2013~~ 2012, and each September thereafter, as Sickle Cell Anemia
15 Awareness Month; and be it further

16 *Resolved,* That the Legislature urges the Congress of the United
17 States to support the President's continuation of funding for the
18 Sickle Cell Anemia Demonstration Program, the Registry and
19 Surveillance System for Hemoglobinopathy Program Initiative,
20 and the Public Health Approach Disorders program, and to make
21 sickle cell anemia and other genetic hemoglobin disorders a public
22 health priority; and *be it further*

23 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
24 of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United
25 States, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives,
26 the President pro Tempore of the United States Senate, each
27 Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the
28 United States, and to the author for appropriate distribution.