

1 INTERIM RESOLUTION 2021-005

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3 REQUESTING THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL RECOGNIZE SEPTEMBER
4 2022 AS "SICKLE CELL DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH" IN ARKANSAS.
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6 WHEREAS, "sickle cell anemia" and "sickle cell disease", used
7 interchangeably, refer to a group of inherited disorders that affect the red
8 blood cells; and
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10 WHEREAS, sickle cell disease is a disease in which a person's body can
11 produce abnormally-shaped red blood cells that resemble a crescent or sickle
12 that do not live as long as normal, round red blood cells, which leads to
13 anemia; and
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15 WHEREAS, the sickle-shaped cells can get stuck in blood vessels and
16 block blood flow, resulting in vaso-occlusive crises, which can cause pain
17 and tissue damage; and
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19 WHEREAS, sickle cell disease is a genetic disorder where individuals
20 with the disease are born with two (2) sickle cell genes, one (1) inherited
21 from each parent; and
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23 WHEREAS, an individual with only one sickle cell gene has a "sickle
24 cell trait", which occurs in one (1) out of every thirteen (13) African
25 Americans and in one (1) out of every one hundred (100) Latinos in the United
26 States; and
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28 WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that
29 sickle cell disease affects approximately one hundred thousand (100,000)
30 Americans, and occurs among about one (1) in every three hundred sixty-five
31 (365) African-American births, and one (1) out of every sixteen thousand
32 three hundred (16,300) Hispanic-American births, and it is estimated that
33 more than one thousand fifty (1,050) Arkansans have sickle cell disease; and
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1 WHEREAS, the United States Food and Drug Administration has granted
2 orphan drug designation to certain sickle cell therapies to provide
3 incentives and encourage the development of therapies for rare diseases; and
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5 WHEREAS, sickle cell disease is a chronic condition that can affect any
6 organ, including the kidneys, lungs, and spleen, and research indicates that
7 patients experience many severe complications, including stroke, infection,
8 and pulmonary embolism, and have a shorter life expectancy than the general
9 population; and
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11 WHEREAS, vaso-occlusive crises are a common painful complication of
12 sickle cell disease in adolescents and adults which may occur several times a
13 year; and
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15 WHEREAS, these recurrent episodes induce severe pain, decrease quality
16 of life, can cause life-threatening complications, including stroke, and are
17 associated with increased mortality; and
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19 WHEREAS, vaso-occlusive crises typically last several days and are the
20 leading cause of hospitalizations of patients with sickle cell disease; and
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22 WHEREAS, sickle cell disease can be a life-threatening condition
23 leading to a 25- to 30-year reduction in life expectancy; and
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25 WHEREAS, access to comprehensive care can be limited by social,
26 economic, cultural, and geographic barriers; and
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28 WHEREAS, individuals living with sickle cell disease encounter barriers
29 to obtaining quality care and improving their quality of life, and these
30 barriers include limitations in geographic access to comprehensive care, the
31 varied use of effective treatments, the high reliance on emergency care and
32 on public health programs, and the limited number of health care providers
33 with knowledge and experience to manage and treat sickle cell disease; and
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35 WHEREAS, while there is no widely available cure for sickle cell
36 disease, one-time gene therapies, including gene editing therapeutic

1 approaches, are being developed and may offer potential cures for some
2 patients; and

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4 WHEREAS, one-time, potentially curative therapies for sickle cell
5 disease may offer substantial savings over the patient's lifetime by avoiding
6 the cost of future healthcare services,

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8 NOW THEREFORE,

9 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE NINETY-THIRD
10 GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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12 THAT the Arkansas Legislative Council recognizes September 2022 as
13 "Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month" in Arkansas.

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15 Respectfully submitted,

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19 Representative Fredrick J. Love
20 District 29

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23 Prepared by: JMB/JMT
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