

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1265 (Delegate Walker, *et al.*)
Health and Government Operations

State Government - Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month

This bill requires the Governor to annually proclaim the month of September as Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2009.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Commemorating Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month will not affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Six official commemorative days and two months are recognized in State law as shown in **Exhibit 1**. The Governor also must issue a proclamation each year encouraging citizens and other individuals to observe a moment of silence at 3 p.m. on Memorial Day to unite in remembrance and commemorate the heroic acts and efforts of Marylanders who have served and died in the U.S. armed forces.

Exhibit 1
Official Commemorative Days and Months in Maryland

Asian Lunar New Year Day ¹	January/February
Black History Month	February
Women’s History Month	March
John Hanson’s Birthday ²	April 13
Law Day	May 1
Maryland Charter Day	June 20
Poetry Day	October 15
Annapolis Charter Day	December 17

¹Day designated as new year on the Asian lunar calendar.

²John Hanson served as the first president of the Continental Congress under the Articles of Confederation from 1781 to 1782.

Background: Sickle cell disease is a group of inherited red blood cell disorders. Healthy red blood cells are round, and they move through small blood vessels to carry oxygen to all parts of the body. In sickle cell disease, the red blood cells become hard and sticky and look like a C-shaped farm tool called a “sickle.” The sickle cells die early, which causes a constant shortage of red blood cells. Also, when they travel through small blood vessels, they get stuck and clog the blood flow. This can cause pain and other serious problems.

Sickle cell anemia is one type of anemia, a condition in which blood has a lower than normal number of red blood cells. Sickle cell anemia is an inherited, lifelong disease. People who have the disease are born with it. Sickle cell anemia affects millions of people worldwide. The disease has no widely available cure. However, there are treatments for the symptoms and complications of the disease. Bone marrow transplants may offer a cure in a small number of cases.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 1048 (Senator Muse) - Rules.

Information Source(s): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Legislative Services

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mam/hlb

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