



STATE OF TENNESSEE
PROCLAMATION

BY THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS, sickle cell disease is a chronic hereditary blood disorder that can cause severe pain and result in damage to the brain and other vital organs like the kidneys, liver, spleen and heart; and

WHEREAS, people who inherit one sickle cell gene from one parent and one normal gene from the other parent have sickle cell trait and usually do not have signs or symptoms of sickle cell disease; and

WHEREAS, sickle cell disease can result in avascular necrosis of the hips, knees, ankle and shoulder; there can be acute painful episodes, entrapment of blood in the spleen, severe anemia, acute lung complications (acute chest syndrome), priapism in males, and pregnancy complications; and

WHEREAS, these life-threatening complications can develop rapidly, including infections of the blood, meningitis and stroke; stroke can be either silent (no overt symptoms) or clinical (with symptoms) and can affect children as young as 18 months; and

WHEREAS, up to 40% of children diagnosed with sickle cell disease will have a silent stroke by the age of 18, which can impact their ability to learn and hold a job; and

WHEREAS, sickle cell disease is most common in Africans and African-Americans, but the disease can also be found in other demographics, primarily in South and Central America, the Caribbean, Mediterranean countries and India; and

WHEREAS, sickle cell disease is the most common inherited genetic disorder in the United States, affecting approximately 100,000 Americans; one in 13 African Americans are affected by the sickle cell trait; and

WHEREAS, in Tennessee, an estimated 4,000 African Americans have sickle cell disease; and

WHEREAS, while the cure for sickle cell disease is through a transplant of bone marrow or stem cells, current research has led to powerful new gene-editing techniques holding promise for new cures for sickle cell disease and other blood disorders; and

WHEREAS, these treatments and medicines are being developed to attack the root cause of the disease for these patients who have so far had few options;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim September 2021 as

Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month

in Tennessee and encourage all citizens to join me in this worthy observance.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the State of Tennessee to be affixed at Nashville on this twenty-second day of September, 2021.

Governor

Secretary of State

