

2006 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 13

Designating November, in 2006 and in each succeeding year, as "Lung Cancer Awareness Month" in Virginia.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 20, 2006

Agreed to by the Senate, February 28, 2006

WHEREAS, the health of the citizens of the Commonwealth is of the utmost importance to the prosperity and well-being of Virginia's families and communities; and

WHEREAS, lung cancer is the leading cause of death among both men and women throughout our nation, killing more people than colon, breast, prostate, liver, and kidney cancers combined, and it is expected to take the lives of more than 4,000 Virginians this year; and

WHEREAS, it is important for Virginians to be more aware of the symptoms of lung cancer; including, but not limited to, a new or persistent cough, excessive wheezing, coughing up blood, shortness of breath, repeated upper respiratory ailments, and pain in the chest, shoulders, or back that will not go away; and

WHEREAS, the American Cancer Society reports that there were 172,000 new cases of lung cancer diagnosed in the United States in 2005, with 4,400 of these diagnoses occurring in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the use of tobacco by far is the leading cause of lung cancer in the United States with more than 87% of cases caused by smoking; over 50% of new lung cancer cases will be diagnosed at a very late stage in the disease and only 5% of these patients will live for 5 years; and

WHEREAS, even though lung cancer is the nation's number one cancer killer and factors other than smoking, such as strong family history, exposure to second hand smoke or cancer-causing agents in the environment or the workplace, may increase the risk of the disease, there is little effort to develop a definitive lung cancer screening protocol even for higher risk patients; and

WHEREAS, radon gas, which can seep up through the soil under a home or building, entering through gaps, cracks, and drains, is considered to be the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States accounting for 12% or between 15,000 and 22,000 cases each year; and

WHEREAS, according to the Lung Cancer Alliance (ALCASE), over 60% of all new lung cancer cases are diagnosed in people who managed to quit smoking decades ago, or who seldom or never smoked; and

WHEREAS, that the General Assembly, in keeping with the initiatives of the Lung Cancer Alliance and other cancer support groups nationwide, recognizes the importance of making the fight against lung cancer a priority for a far greater number of people and better educating the public that a healthy lifestyle, the use and improvement of smoking cessation products and techniques, and increased medical consultation, early disease detection, and research can reduce lung cancer deaths; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate November, in 2006 and in each succeeding year, as "Lung Cancer Awareness Month" in Virginia and encourage Virginians to support and participate in appropriate programs and activities by cancer organizations and other supporting entities to heighten public awareness of the many ways in which death from lung cancer may be alleviated in the Commonwealth and the nation; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates post the designation of "Lung Cancer Awareness Month" on the General Assembly's website.

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