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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 35

Offered January 13, 2016

Prefiled January 4, 2016

Designating April, in 2016 and in each succeeding year, as Advance Care Planning Month in Virginia.

Patrons—Miller; Delegate: Hodges

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, advance care planning allows individuals to make clear decisions about the care they would want to receive, on the basis of personal values and preferences, should they become unable to speak for themselves; and

WHEREAS, studies indicate that 90 percent of the public recognize the importance of honoring each individual's wishes for treatment at the end of life, but less than 30 percent of all Virginians have executed an advance directive making their wishes known; and

WHEREAS, Advance Care Planning Month is designed to raise public awareness of the importance of planning ahead for end-of-life decisions or medical treatment should one be unable to communicate these wishes and to encourage the specific use of advance directives to document these important health care decisions; and

WHEREAS, the Advance Care Planning Coalition of Eastern Virginia, the Coordinating Committee to Promote Use of Advance Directives in Mental Health Care and its founding partners, the Institute of Law, Psychiatry, and Public Policy at the University of Virginia and the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Disability Services, Honoring Choices Virginia, LeadingAge Virginia, the Medical Society of Virginia, the Richmond Academy of Medicine, the Virginia Association for Hospices and Palliative Care, the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, the Virginia Department of Health, the Virginia Health Care Association, the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association, and the Virginia POST Collaborative engage in educating the public about the importance of discussing health care choices and executing advance directives; and

WHEREAS, one of the primary goals of Advance Care Planning Month is to encourage medical, legal, and human service organizations to participate in a Commonwealth-wide effort to improve public knowledge and increase the number of Virginia residents with advance directives; and

WHEREAS, it is important for all organizations and businesses promoting advance care planning to provide clear and consistent information to the public about advance directives; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly designate April, in 2016 and in each succeeding year, as Advance Care Planning Month in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit a copies of this resolution to the Advance Care Planning Coalition of Eastern Virginia, the Coordinating Committee to Promote Use of Advance Directives in Mental Health Care and its founding partners, the Institute of Law, Psychiatry, and Public Policy at the University of Virginia and the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Disability Services, Honoring Choices Virginia, LeadingAge Virginia, the Medical Society of Virginia, the Richmond Academy of Medicine, the Virginia Association for Hospices and Palliative Care, the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, the Virginia Department of Health, the Virginia Health Care Association, the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association, and the Virginia POST Collaborative so that members of the organizations may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the Senate post the designation of this month on the General Assembly's website.

INTRODUCED

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