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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 133

Offered January 10, 2020

Designating October, in 2020 and in each succeeding year, as Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome Awareness Month in Virginia.

Patrons—Keam; Senator: McClellan

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome, a form of dysautonomia, is a disorder of the nervous system that results in a malfunction of the autonomic nervous system, which is responsible for "automatic" bodily functions such as respiration, heart rate, blood pressure, kidney function, digestion, and temperature control; and

WHEREAS, the symptoms of Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS) include fatigue, headaches, lightheadedness, heart palpitations, nausea, syncope, coldness or pain in the extremities, tachycardia upon standing, blood pooling in the extremities, blood pressure dysregulation, fainting, dilated pupils that cause a sensitivity to light and frequent migraines, chest pains, shortness of breath, gastrointestinal motility problems, and peripheral neuropathy, among many others; and

WHEREAS, there is no known cure for POTS, which affects an estimated one to three million Americans and is most often seen in women between the ages of 15 and 50; and

WHEREAS, 25 percent of POTS patients are so disabled that they cannot work or attend school; researchers compare the disability seen in POTS to the disability seen in congestive heart failure or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; and

WHEREAS, POTS is often misdiagnosed as anxiety, panic attacks, vasovagal syncope, chronic fatigue syndrome, or inappropriate sinus tachycardia, and 85 percent of POTS patients are told their symptoms are all in their heads; and

WHEREAS, the average delay of diagnosis for POTS is five years and 11 months; patients are often expensively and extensively investigated, often to no avail; and

WHEREAS, increased awareness of POTS will save lives by helping patients receive a diagnosis and treatment in a timely manner and foster support for individuals and families coping with POTS throughout the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, members of the professional medical community, patients, and family members are working diligently to educate the residents of Virginia about POTS; and

WHEREAS, POTS Awareness Month is an opportunity to garner support for further research into the condition and promote increased education about, and mindfulness of, the symptoms that affect people with POTS; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate October, in 2020 and in each succeeding year, as Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome Awareness Month in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to Dysautonomia International so that members of the organization 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 House of Delegates post the designation of this month on the General Assembly's website.

INTRODUCED

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