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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 822

Offered February 20, 2023

*Commending the Sickie Cell Association, Inc.*

Patrons—Hayes and Sickles; Senator: Rouse

WHEREAS, for five decades, the Sickie Cell Association, Inc., a member of Sickie Cell Chapters of Virginia, Inc., has advocated on behalf of sickie cell disease patients and their families, while providing comprehensive education, counseling, and support services; and

WHEREAS, a nonprofit, community-based organization, the Sickie Cell Association was founded in Norfolk in 1972 to educate the public, encourage support for research, and empower people living with sickie cell disease, an incurable red blood cell disorder that can cause chronic pain and other severe health complications; and

WHEREAS, in 1977, representatives from the Sickie Cell Association and four other sickie cell chapters from Danville, Fredericksburg, Hampton, and Richmond met to discuss plans for a joint statewide conference; the chapters held their first annual conference on September 22-23, 1978, in Norfolk, and subsequently agreed to incorporate into a statewide organization, Sickie Cell Chapters of Virginia, to better serve their communities; and

WHEREAS, sickie cell disease affects approximately 100,000 people nationwide and thousands of people in the Commonwealth, as many as half of whom live in Hampton Roads; as of 2019, the Sickie Cell Association worked directly with 230 families in the region; and

WHEREAS, sickie cell disease can result in debilitating pain necessitating emergency room and doctor visits, as well as time off work or school, and treatments can cost tens of thousands of dollars per year; the Sickie Cell Association provides a critical support system to help patients and their families navigate options for treatment and care; and

WHEREAS, the Sickie Cell Association works diligently to raise awareness of ways that community members can help those in need, such as through blood donations; the organization has built strong local partnerships with churches, civic groups, fraternities and sororities, corporations, and small businesses to spread its message and support fundraising events like its annual Walk for Sickie Cell; and

WHEREAS, Judy Anderson has provided exceptional leadership to the Sickie Cell Association as its executive director for the past 40 years; and

WHEREAS, the Sickie Cell Association continues to fulfill its vital mission through the guidance of its board of directors, the hard work of its staff members, and the generosity of its countless volunteers and donors; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Sickie Cell Association, Inc., on the occasion of its 50th anniversary of service to the Hampton Roads community; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Judy Anderson, executive director of the Sickie Cell Association, Inc., as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the organization's life-changing contributions to people with sickie cell disease and their families.

INTRODUCED

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