

2009 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 274

Offered January 14, 2009

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Designating the third week of September, in 2009 and in each succeeding year, as Mitochondrial Disease Awareness Week in Virginia.

Patrons—Reynolds; Delegates: Armstrong, Marshall, D.W., Merricks and O'Bannon

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, mitochondria are the power plants in every cell of a person's body and create more than 90 percent of the energy needed by the body to sustain life and support growth; and

WHEREAS, mitochondria may not function correctly due to genetic defects, damage caused by drugs, or damage caused by destructive molecules called free radicals; and

WHEREAS, when mitochondria fail, cell injury and cell death follow, and if the process is repeated throughout the body, whole systems begin to fail; and

WHEREAS, mitochondrial diseases can cause isolated symptoms such as seizures, low blood counts, blindness, deafness, dementia, heart failure, and progressive muscle weakness, but more often they cause failure of several organ systems in sequence; and

WHEREAS, although mitochondrial diseases can affect any person at any age, it is estimated that more than one in 4,000 children born in the United States each year will develop a mitochondrial disease by 10 years of age; and

WHEREAS, since mitochondrial disorders mimic other diseases, it is believed that patients with these grave conditions are underdiagnosed; and

WHEREAS, currently no cures or effective therapies exist for mitochondrial disorders, but early diagnosis can help patients and their families use proper medication and nutritional supplements to improve the quality of life and even prolong life; and

WHEREAS, a week dedicated to programs and activities on mitochondrial disease will greatly raise awareness and help educate Virginia's citizens about mitochondrial disorders and their impact on patients and their families in the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly designate the third week of September, in 2009 and each succeeding year, as Mitochondrial Disease Awareness Week in Virginia; and, be it

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

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