

2014 SESSION

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 161

Offered January 16, 2014

Designating the third week in January, in 2015 and in each succeeding year, as Teen Cancer Awareness Week in Virginia.

Patrons—Rust, Comstock, LeMunyon, Ransone and Plum

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, cancer among adolescents is rare, but is still the leading cause of death from disease in teenagers between the ages of 15 and 19; and

WHEREAS, while adolescent cancer patients should be treated at pediatric hospitals, only one-third of them are treated at pediatric oncology centers; and

WHEREAS, adolescent cancer patients often feel out of place because most pediatric oncology programs focus on the needs of younger patients; similarly, adult cancer facilities are not suited to providing the unique care necessary for adolescent patients; and

WHEREAS, adolescent cancer patients are thus stranded between two medical systems, neither of which adequately addresses their clinical and psychosocial needs; and

WHEREAS, only an average of nine percent of cancer patients between the ages of 15 and 24 are enrolled in clinical trials, compared with 40 percent of cancer patients aged 14 and younger; and

WHEREAS, the five-year survival rate of adolescents with cancer is much lower than that of children with cancer; and

WHEREAS, adolescents with cancer have unique concerns about their education, their social lives, their body image, infertility, and other issues, and too often their needs are not understood or acknowledged; and

WHEREAS, many adolescent cancer survivors have difficulty readjusting to school and social settings, experience anxiety, and may face increased learning difficulties; and

WHEREAS, it is important to understand the clinical needs of adolescents with cancer, seek to prevent cancer in adolescents, and increase awareness in the Commonwealth about the unique challenges facing adolescents with cancer; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate the third week in January, in 2015 and in each succeeding year, as Teen Cancer Awareness Week in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to the members of "Bite me Cancer® " so that they 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 week on the General Assembly's website.

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