

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 137

Designating September, in 2022 and in each succeeding year, as Peripheral Artery Disease Awareness Month in Virginia.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 8, 2022

Agreed to by the Senate, March 1, 2022

WHEREAS, peripheral artery disease, a chronic circulatory condition in which the peripheral arteries are narrowed, limiting their ability to carry blood and oxygen to the extremities of the body, affects nearly 20 million Americans; and

WHEREAS, peripheral artery disease (PAD) is the result of atherosclerosis, or the hardening and narrowing of the arteries from plaque buildup, and its risk factors include smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, coronary artery disease, a family history of serious vascular problems, and limb ischemia; and

WHEREAS, PAD restricts the flow of blood, causing less oxygen to reach the body's extremities; in early forms of the disease, this can lead to pain and cramping, while in more advanced stages it can result in limb loss; and

WHEREAS, PAD most often affects individuals in their lower extremities, and all individuals with risk factors should notify their physician if they experience pain in their legs or feet after walking or exercising, the most common symptom of the disease; and

WHEREAS, while many individuals with PAD never experience symptoms, other warning signs include pain in the ball of the foot or toes; nighttime foot pain that improves when hanging the foot over the side of the bed; ulcers or sores on the foot, ankle, or toes that do not heal; and blue or black discoloration of the toes; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that approximately 200,000 individuals, including a disproportionate number of individuals from minority communities, will need amputations as a result of PAD that could have been avoided with proper diagnosis and treatment; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the risk of amputation, individuals with PAD are at higher risk of suffering other major medical conditions, including critical limb ischemia, heart attack, or stroke; and

WHEREAS, PAD affects approximately 12 to 20 percent of Americans ages 60 and older and is more commonly found in men than in women; and

WHEREAS, all individuals who think they may have PAD should consult their physician, who will be able to easily diagnose the disease through blood pressure measurements, Doppler ultrasounds, arteriograms, and other imaging tests; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that treatment, including reopening blocked or narrowed arteries through a process known as revascularization, can significantly improve circulation and reduce the effects of PAD in a vast majority of patients; and

WHEREAS, individuals can work to diminish their chances of developing PAD or to slow the progression of the disease by following a healthy lifestyle centered around regular exercise and a balanced diet; and

WHEREAS, despite the prevalence of PAD, it often goes unrecognized by individuals and undiagnosed or misdiagnosed by health care professionals, resulting in negative health outcomes and other risks that could be avoided; and

WHEREAS, the Cardiovascular Coalition, an organization dedicated to advancing patient access to care for PAD, has declared September to be PAD Awareness Month in hopes that increased awareness will improve access to screening and treatments, reduce care costs, prevent limb loss, and enhance the overall well-being of countless individuals; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate September, in 2022 and in each succeeding year, as Peripheral Artery Disease Awareness Month in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to Vascular Cures 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.

ENROLLED

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