

2022 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 4

Offered January 12, 2022

Prefiled December 30, 2021

Designating May 27, in 2022 and in each succeeding year, as Student-Athlete Mental Health Awareness Day in Virginia.

Patron—Webert

Committee Referral Pending

WHEREAS, millions of Americans are affected by mental health issues each year, and student-athletes at the high school and college levels face unique challenges both on and off the field; and

WHEREAS, high physical demands, struggles with time management, and academic and social pressures can result in eating disorders, difficulty sleeping, lack of focus, anxiety, depression, and other mental health symptoms among student-athletes; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, researchers at Drexel University and Kean University reported that nearly 25 percent of surveyed collegiate athletes displayed depressive symptoms and a study by *Psychology Today* found that 6.3 percent of collegiate athletes met the criteria for clinically significant depression; and

WHEREAS, the nonprofit organization Morgan's Message was created to honor Morgan D. Rodgers, a former lacrosse player at Duke University who was born on May 27, 1997, and died by suicide in 2019 after her collegiate athletic career ended prematurely due to an injury; and

WHEREAS, Morgan's Message works with current and former student-athletes at the high school and college levels to eliminate the stigma around mental health and help individuals feel safe and comfortable speaking about their own experiences and seeking assistance; and

WHEREAS, Morgan's Message strives to equalize support for diagnosis and treatment of mental health conditions with that of physical injuries and build resources to address mental health concerns among student-athletes in a timely and effective manner; and

WHEREAS, Student-Athlete Mental Health Awareness Day provides an opportunity for all Virginians to learn about mental health issues related to student athletics and support the critical missions of Morgan's Message and other mental health organizations; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby designate May 27, in 2022 and in each succeeding year, as Student-Athlete Mental Health Awareness Day; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to Morgan's Message 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 day on the General Assembly's website.

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