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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 226 Session of  
2011

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INTRODUCED BY LEACH, TARTAGLIONE, STACK, ERICKSON, GREENLEAF,  
BREWSTER, WARD, HUGHES, SCHWANK, RAFFERTY, BROWNE, FONTANA,  
PILEGGI, DINNIMAN, WAUGH, FERLO, SOLOBAY, COSTA, ALLOWAY AND  
EARLL, NOVEMBER 1, 2011

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INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, NOVEMBER 1, 2011

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of November 2011 as "Hydrocephalus  
2 Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania, and urging governmental  
3 agencies to collect disease incidence data relating to  
4 hydrocephalus.

5 WHEREAS, Hydrocephalus (Hc) is a condition in which the  
6 primary characteristic is excessive accumulation of fluid in the  
7 brain; and

8 WHEREAS, Hc was once known as "water on the brain," where the  
9 "water" is actually cerebrospinal fluid (CSF), a clear fluid  
10 that surrounds the brain and spinal cord; and

11 WHEREAS, The excessive accumulation of CSF results in an  
12 abnormal widening of spaces in the brain called ventricles,  
13 which creates harmful pressure on the tissues of the brain; and

14 WHEREAS, CSF has three important life-sustaining functions:

15 (1) to keep the brain tissue buoyant, acting as a  
16 cushion or "shock absorber";

17 (2) to act as the vehicle for delivering nutrients to  
18 the brain and removing waste; and

1           (3) to flow between the cranium and spine and compensate  
2 for changes in intracranial blood volume, the amount of blood  
3 within the brain;

4 and

5       WHEREAS, The balance between production and absorption of CSF  
6 is critically important; and

7       WHEREAS, Because CSF is made continuously, medical conditions  
8 that block its normal flow or absorption will result in an over-  
9 accumulation of CSF, and the resulting pressure of the fluid  
10 against brain tissue is what causes Hc; and

11       WHEREAS, Hc is a serious neurological condition for which  
12 there is no known cure, and it affects an estimated one million  
13 Americans; and

14       WHEREAS, Hc can affect anyone at anytime of life for no known  
15 cause or one of 180 known causes; and

16       WHEREAS, One out of every 500 babies are born with Hc; and

17       WHEREAS, Hc is the leading cause for brain surgery in  
18 children in the United States; and

19       WHEREAS, Posttraumatic hydrocephalus (PTH) is a frequent and  
20 serious complication that follows a traumatic brain injury  
21 (TBI); and

22       WHEREAS, The "Signature Wound" of the war in Iraq and  
23 Afghanistan is TBI caused by explosions, and TBI has become one  
24 of the most common combat wounds suffered in Iraq; and

25       WHEREAS, If PTH goes unrecognized or untreated, it could  
26 greatly impact and increase morbidity or the mortality rate  
27 following a TBI; and

28       WHEREAS, More than 375,000 older Americans have Hc, which  
29 often goes undetected or misdiagnosed as dementia, Alzheimer's  
30 disease or Parkinson's disease; and

1       WHEREAS, The standard treatment for Hc was developed in 1952  
2 and carries multiple risks, including shunt failure, infection,  
3 over drainage, under drainage and death; and

4       WHEREAS, Children with Hc may have significantly impaired  
5 learning, memory and executive functions; and

6       WHEREAS, With appropriate diagnosis and treatment, people  
7 with Hc have a greater chance to live full and productive lives;  
8 and

9       WHEREAS, Each year, the people of the United States spend in  
10 excess of \$1 billion to treat Hc; and

11       WHEREAS, A September 2005 conference sponsored by seven  
12 institutes of the National Institutes of Health, and titled,  
13 "Hydrocephalus: Myths, New Facts, Clear Directions," resulted in  
14 efforts to initiate new, collaborative research and treatment  
15 efforts; and

16       WHEREAS, Accurate statistics reflecting the rate, cause and  
17 outcome of incidence of Hc and the health and education burden  
18 this condition has on individuals and families have not yet been  
19 collected by the Federal and State governments; and

20       WHEREAS, Further research into the epidemiology,  
21 pathophysiology, disease burden and improved treatment of Hc  
22 should be conducted within the Federal and State governments;  
23 therefore be it

24       RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the month of November  
25 2011 as "Hydrocephalus Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania so that  
26 Pennsylvanians can become more familiar with Hc and the  
27 individuals dedicated to finding its cure.