A RESOLUTION

Recognizing December 1, 2020, as "World AIDS Day" in Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, The World Health Organization established "World AIDS Day" in 1988 to bring attention to the devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and remember those who have lost their lives to the disease; and

WHEREAS, "World AIDS Day" is an opportunity to unite individuals, organizations and local agencies across the world to increase awareness and education about HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care; and

WHEREAS, There are approximately 38 million people across the globe living with HIV/AIDS; and

WHEREAS, Fortunately, AIDS-related deaths have been reduced by 60% since the peak in 2004; and

WHEREAS, In 2019, approximately 690,000 deaths occurred worldwide, compared to 1.1 million deaths worldwide in 2010; and
WHEREAS, However, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 1.2 million people are living with HIV in the United States, with one in seven unaware of their infection; and

WHEREAS, Populations at increased risk of HIV infection face high levels of stigma due to their gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, drug use or sex work; and

WHEREAS, Stigma toward people living with or at risk of HIV discourages or delays the access of health care services, including HIV prevention methods, HIV status testing, enrolling in care and adhering to treatment; and

WHEREAS, The CDC reports that at the end of 2016, out of an estimated 1.1 million people living with HIV in the United States, 64% received HIV medical care, 49% were retained in care and 53% achieved viral suppression, following the HIV continuum care model; and

WHEREAS, People living with HIV may not receive continuous medical care for various reasons, including the cost of medical care and HIV drugs, stigma, lack of stable housing and transportation; and

WHEREAS, The World AIDS Campaign was launched in 1997 by UNAIDS, the joint United Nations program on HIV/AIDS, with the mission of raising public awareness of HIV/AIDS and promoting nonjudgmental and nondiscriminatory access to HIV prevention, treatment and care for all human beings; and

WHEREAS, For more than 20 years, UNAIDS has helped to position, shape and scale up the response to HIV, encouraging dialogue and bringing in communities that have been left out of decision making; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that all levels of government
recognize the various barriers that exist to HIV/AIDS prevention, testing and care and continue to make efforts to combat stigma and discrimination in order to improve health outcomes for people living with HIV; and

WHEREAS, New HIV diagnoses continue at far too high a level, with 37,968 Americans diagnosed with HIV in 2018; and

WHEREAS, Although the estimated number of annual HIV infections in the United States declined 7% between 2014 and 2018, HIV/AIDS continues to disproportionately affect various populations and diagnoses are not evenly distributed across states and regions; and

WHEREAS, In Pennsylvania in 2018, the rate of new HIV diagnosis was approximately 21 out of 100,000 of the population amongst young adults who accounted for 13% of the overall population; and

WHEREAS, Every year, on December 1 and throughout the month of December, individuals and organizations across the world speak out against the stigma and discrimination against individuals with HIV/AIDS, and call for an increased response to move forward to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives join other states and countries around the world in recognizing December 1, 2020, as "World AIDS Day" in an effort to increase awareness, provide education about HIV/AIDS and demonstrate compassion for those affected; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives remind the public and government of the ongoing global challenges associated with eradicating HIV and the essential role that communities have played in the AIDS response at the international, national and local levels.