

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of November 2013 as "Hydrocephalus
2 Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Hydrocephalus is a condition in which an abnormal
4 accumulation of fluid in the cerebral ventricles causes
5 enlargement of the skull and compression of the brain,
6 destroying much of the neural tissue; and

7 WHEREAS, There is no medical therapy to treat hydrocephalus,
8 and the only effective treatments are surgical; and

9 WHEREAS, While many people are helped by surgery, many more
10 need further operations to stay well, and of the more than
11 40,000 hydrocephalus operations performed annually, only 30% are
12 a patient's first surgery to treat hydrocephalus; and

13 WHEREAS, The medical costs for hydrocephalus are more than \$1
14 billion per year, yet the National Institutes of Health invests
15 less than \$1 million per year in hydrocephalus treatment; and

16 WHEREAS, Hydrocephalus affects hundreds of thousands of
17 Americans of every age from infants to the elderly, and it

1 affects people from all walks of life and every socioeconomic
2 background; and

3 WHEREAS, One to two of every 1,000 babies are born with
4 hydrocephalus, making it as common as Down syndrome and more
5 common than spina bifida or brain tumors; and

6 WHEREAS, Hydrocephalus is the most common reason for brain
7 surgery in children; and

8 WHEREAS, There are fewer than ten centers in the United
9 States specializing in treating adults with hydrocephalus; and

10 WHEREAS, An estimated 375,000 of older Americans have normal
11 pressure hydrocephalus, a disorder which often goes undiagnosed
12 and untreated; and

13 WHEREAS, Research suggests that treating hydrocephalus in the
14 elderly population would reduce United States health care
15 expenditures by \$25,000 per patient, or \$148 million, over five
16 years; and

17 WHEREAS, Hydrocephalus also goes undiagnosed and untreated in
18 younger adults, leading to substantial work force loss and
19 health care costs; and

20 WHEREAS, At times, doctors are understandably reticent to
21 take on complicated hydrocephalus cases, particularly in adults,
22 because little is known about the disorder; and

23 WHEREAS, Over the last 50 years, there has been no
24 significant improvement in hydrocephalus treatment and no
25 progress toward prevention or cure, and research is essential;
26 and

27 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth is home to several renowned
28 medical institutions and other organizations working to increase
29 public awareness and develop new treatments that will improve
30 the lives of those who are afflicted with this condition;

1 therefore be it

2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the
3 month of November 2013 as "Hydrocephalus Awareness Month" in
4 Pennsylvania and call upon all residents of this Commonwealth to
5 observe this month by participating in activities to raise
6 awareness of hydrocephalus.