

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of November 2014 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, More than one million Americans are affected by
17 hydrocephalus from infancy to adulthood; and

1 WHEREAS, On average, 6,000 babies are born with hydrocephalus
2 every year, making it as common as Down syndrome and more common
3 than spina bifida or brain tumors; and

4 WHEREAS, Hydrocephalus is the most common reason for brain
5 surgery in children; and

6 WHEREAS, There are fewer than ten treatment centers in the
7 United States that specialize in treating hydrocephalus in
8 adults; and

9 WHEREAS, An estimated 375,000 adults over 60 years of age
10 have Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus, a disorder which often goes
11 undiagnosed and untreated; and

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

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

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

22 WHEREAS, Over the last 50 years, there has been no
23 significant improvement in hydrocephalus prevention and
24 treatment and no progress towards a cure; and

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

30 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the

1 month of November 2014 as "Hydrocephalus Awareness Month" in
2 Pennsylvania and call upon all residents of this Commonwealth to
3 observe this month by participating in activities to raise
4 awareness of hydrocephalus.
