
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 944 Session of
2018

INTRODUCED BY CORBIN, PICKETT, GREINER, PEIFER, WARD, HENNESSEY,
KINSEY, DONATUCCI, LONGIETTI, NEILSON, FEE, TOOHL,
PASHINSKI, MILLARD, ZIMMERMAN, RYAN, DUSH, SONNEY, MURT,
HEFFLEY, DIGIROLAMO, BURNS, SCHLOSSBERG, DRISCOLL, STAATS,
CALTAGIRONE, EVERETT, HILL-EVANS, MARSICO, M. QUINN,
WHEELAND, R. BROWN AND SCHLEGEL CULVER, MAY 24, 2018

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, MAY 24, 2018

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of September 2018 as "Shingles Awareness
2 and Improvement Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Herpes zoster or shingles is a disease caused by the
4 same virus that causes chickenpox; and

5 WHEREAS, Any individual who has contracted chickenpox is at
6 risk for shingles, which amounts to approximately 98% of the
7 adult population of the United States; and

8 WHEREAS, Nearly 1 in 3 people in the United States will
9 contract shingles in their lifetime, corresponding to an
10 estimated 1 million people annually; and

11 WHEREAS, The risk of shingles increases with age, with nearly
12 half of those affected over 60 years of age; and

13 WHEREAS, Half of people living until 85 years of age will
14 develop shingles; and

15 WHEREAS, Shingles is a viral infection that causes a painful
16 and sometimes severe rash along with other symptoms, including

1 long-term nerve pain, fever, headache, chills, upset stomach,
2 muscle weakness, skin infection, scarring and decrease or loss
3 of vision or hearing; and

4 WHEREAS, As many as 20% of adults who have contracted
5 shingles will develop postherpetic neuralgia, a debilitating
6 complication of shingles that causes severe pain that may
7 interfere with sleep and recreational activities and be
8 associated with clinical depression; and

9 WHEREAS, Vaccines have reduced the burden of widespread and
10 often fatal diseases, enabling individuals to lead longer and
11 healthier lives while reducing health care costs; and

12 WHEREAS, Although much attention has been paid to the
13 importance of childhood vaccinations, there is a general lack of
14 awareness of adult-recommended vaccines and a misperception that
15 immunizations are unnecessary for healthy adults; and

16 WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
17 and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)
18 recommend that healthy adults 50 years of age or older be
19 vaccinated against shingles to prevent shingles and shingles-
20 related complications; and

21 WHEREAS, Despite the recommendations of CDC officials and
22 other experts, as of 2015 only 30% of eligible adults had
23 received the shingles vaccine; and

24 WHEREAS, The annual economic burden of shingles in American
25 adults is estimated to be between \$782 million and \$5 billion;
26 and

27 WHEREAS, The National Academy of Medicine has stated that one
28 of the six causes of excess costs in the United States health
29 care system is missed prevention opportunities; and

30 WHEREAS, Millions of American adults go without routine and

1 recommended vaccinations because our medical system is not set
2 up to ensure that adults receive regular preventive health care;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, As the month of August is observed as "National
5 Immunization Awareness Month," residents of this Commonwealth
6 should be encouraged to speak with their health care providers
7 about proper vaccination against shingles according to current
8 CDC and ACIP recommendations; therefore be it

9 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the
10 month of September 2018 as "Shingles Awareness and Improvement
11 Month" in Pennsylvania to increase public awareness of the
12 importance of adults receiving vaccines against shingles and
13 promote outreach and education efforts concerning adult
14 vaccination; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge the
16 Department of Aging to take appropriate action to promote
17 shingles awareness, including encouraging health care
18 practitioners to discuss vaccines for shingles with adult
19 patients and adopting appropriate programs and initiatives to
20 raise public awareness of the importance of adult vaccination.