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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 143 Session of  
2019

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INTRODUCED BY KINSEY, MURT, SANCHEZ, CALTAGIRONE, PICKETT,  
BIZZARRO, HENNESSEY, HOHENSTEIN, FREEMAN, SCHLOSSBERG,  
DIGIROLAMO, ROTHMAN, SONNEY, MARKOSEK, MULLINS, HILL-EVANS,  
KORTZ, COMMITTA, PYLE, BURNS, SCHLEGEL CULVER, OBERLANDER,  
READSHAW, LONGIETTI, NEILSON, MEHAFFIE, MACKENZIE, STURLA,  
MILLARD AND GOODMAN, MARCH 12, 2019

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
MARCH 12, 2019

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of March 2019 as "Disabilities Awareness  
2 Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, On October 27, 1955, the Pennsylvania General  
4 Assembly passed the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, which  
5 prohibited discrimination in the areas of employment, housing  
6 and public accommodations on the basis of race, color, familial  
7 status, religious creed, ancestry, handicap or disability, age,  
8 sex and national origin; and

9 WHEREAS, On September 26, 1973, the Congress of the United  
10 States passed the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which was the  
11 precursor to the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act  
12 of 1990, and prohibited the Federal Government, as an employer,  
13 from discriminating against qualified individuals with  
14 disabilities; and

15 WHEREAS, On July 26, 1990, President George H. W. Bush signed

1 into law the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA),  
2 which served as the world's first comprehensive civil rights law  
3 for individuals with disabilities; and

4 WHEREAS, According to the United States Census Bureau, nearly  
5 1 in 5 individuals, or approximately 56.7 million individuals,  
6 in the United States have a disability; and

7 WHEREAS, In this Commonwealth, approximately 14.2%, or an  
8 estimated 1.8 million residents, have a disability; and

9 WHEREAS, According to data obtained from the 2017 American  
10 Community Survey, the prevalence of disability in this  
11 Commonwealth by race was 11.3% among whites, 13.1% among those  
12 of Hispanic or Latino origin, 16.2% among black or African  
13 Americans, 16.3% among individuals of other races and 16.3%  
14 among Native Americans; and

15 WHEREAS, According to United States Census data, the economic  
16 consequences of having a disability in America are compelling;  
17 and

18 WHEREAS, Approximately 19.1% of working-age Americans with a  
19 disability are employed as compared to 65.9% of working-age  
20 nondisabled Americans; and

21 WHEREAS, This presents a quality-of-life issue as in 2016 the  
22 poverty rate of working-age individuals with disabilities in  
23 this Commonwealth was estimated to be 28% as compared to 9.4%  
24 for working-age individuals without a disability; and

25 WHEREAS, Although the act of fostering awareness about the  
26 issue of our Commonwealth's disabled population is important,  
27 the real objective lies in ensuring that Pennsylvanians with  
28 disabilities are provided the dignity, respect and  
29 accommodations that they deserve; and

30 WHEREAS, The purpose of this resolution is to recognize the

1 prevalence of the systemic inequities that exist within our  
2 society pertaining to the treatment of our residents with  
3 disabilities as well as acknowledge the many invaluable efforts  
4 that have been made throughout the history of our nation to  
5 institute much-needed civil protections for all Americans;  
6 therefore be it

7       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the  
8 month of March 2019 as "Disabilities Awareness Month" in  
9 Pennsylvania; and be it further

10       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives encourage all  
11 Pennsylvanians to learn more about the many unique challenges  
12 confronting this Commonwealth's residents who are disabled and  
13 assume the task of fostering a greater degree of awareness and  
14 education regarding this critically important subject.