



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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### PROPOSED RESOLUTION

#### RECOGNIZING SICKLE CELL AWARENESS MONTH IN COOK COUNTY

**WHEREAS**, the month of September is National Sickle Cell Awareness Month, a month-long initiative designated by Congress to help focus attention on the need for research and treatment of sickle cell disease; and

**WHEREAS**, this year's theme designated by the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America is "**Sickle Cell Matters 2022**"; and

**WHEREAS**, Sickle cell disease (SCD) is the most common inherited blood disorder in the United States in which red blood cells may become sickle-shaped and harden. For a baby to be born with sickle cell disease, both parents must carry a sickle cell trait or genes. Sickle cell disease is not contagious, and there is no universal cure; and

**WHEREAS**, about 1 in 13 African Americans carry the sickle cell trait, and many do not know they have it, and an estimated 100,000 people in the U.S. have SCD, with approximately 2,000 babies born with SCD annually in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, people of many ethnic backgrounds can have SCD, but it disproportionately affects Black and Brown Americans, with an estimated 1 in 365 Black Americans and 1 in 16,300 Hispanic Americans suffering from SCD; and

**WHEREAS**, Sickle Cell disease leads to complications including chronic severe and unpredictable pain, anemia, frequent infections, swelling in extremities, fatigue, delayed growth and is one of the underlying medical conditions that causes increased risk for severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19, defined as hospitalization, admission to the ICU, intubation or mechanical ventilation, or death; and

**WHEREAS**, President Biden, as he did in 2021, recently passed a proclamation declaring September 2022 as National Sickle Cell Awareness month, reaffirming our commitment to improving the quality of life and health outcomes for all individuals living with SCD by improving access to quality health care, collaborating with partners in the public and private sectors, adhering to the guidance of scientific experts and researchers, and supporting all families affected by SCD; and

**WHEREAS**, this national focus is essential and reinforces the National Institutes of Health (NIH) continued support of SCD research, education, and capacity building, including the "Cure Sickle Cell Initiative" to accelerate safe, effective, and scalable gene therapies to cure the disease; and

**WHEREAS**, because of the many advances and medical breakthroughs in genetic therapies and research, we are now closer to finding a cure for all SCD patients; and

**WHEREAS**, individuals can help be part of the solution by donating blood, which is one of the most critical treatments for sickle cell patients, but less than 10% of Americans donate blood. Additionally, sickle cell patients benefit most from blood transfusions from people of the same race or similar ethnicity, but only 5% of blood donors are of African ancestry; and

**WHEREAS**, education and research, educating others about sickle cell disease and sickle cell trait, and getting tested for

sickle cell trait if you are of African descent and do not know your status are other ways to contribute to this important cause; and

**WHEREAS**, this Honorable Body wishes to promote and raise awareness of Sickle Cell Disease in Cook County and encourage everyone to be a part of this national effort to increase awareness about sickle cell disease and sickle cell trait during the month of September and stand united to improve the health of those living with this disease;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the President and the Cook County Board of Commissioners, on behalf of the more than 5.2 million residents of Cook County, do hereby take this opportunity to acknowledge Sickle Cell Awareness Month; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that in conjunction with National Sickle Cell Awareness Month, that the month of September 2022 be hereby declared Sickle Cell Awareness Month in the County of Cook; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this text be spread upon the official proceedings of this Honorable Body.