SENATE RESOLUTION
8679

By Senators Franklin, Hewitt, Shin, Kohl-Welles, Fraser, Spanel, Prentice and Rasmussen

WHEREAS, Sickle cell anemia is a hereditary disorder that most affects people of African ancestry, but also occurs in other ethnic groups, including people of Mediterranean and Middle Eastern descent; and

WHEREAS, More than 70,000 Americans have sickle cell anemia, and about 2 million Americans - and one in 12 African-Americans - have sickle cell trait; and

WHEREAS, People with sickle cell anemia have inherited two sickle cell genes, one from each parent; a child who has inherited the sickle cell from only one parent will not develop the disease, but will have sickle cell trait; people who have sickle cell trait do not have sickle cell anemia or symptoms of the disease, but they can pass the sickle cell gene to their own children; and

WHEREAS, Because people with sickle cell trait do not have the disease, they may never discover that they carry the gene; teens who are unsure of their sickle cell status should ask their doctors about testing; The National Institutes of Health recommends that all newborns be screened for sickle cell disease, and testing at birth is now required in most states; this helps infants with sickle cell anemia get the care and treatment they need as soon as possible; and

WHEREAS, Normal red blood cells are smooth and round like doughnuts and they move easily through blood vessels to carry oxygen to all parts of the body; in sickle cell anemia, the red blood cells change shape; they become hard, sticky, and shaped like sickles or crescents and, instead of moving through the bloodstream easily, these sickle cells can clog blood vessels and deprive the body's tissues and organs of the oxygen they need to stay healthy; and

WHEREAS, Symptoms include anemia, pain when sickle-shaped red blood cells block the flow of blood to an organ, fatigue, jaundice, eye problems, infections, acute chest syndrome (similar to pneumonia), leg ulcers, strokes, and gallstones; and

WHEREAS, One in every 12 African-Americans have the sickle cell trait versus one in every 413 Caucasians; one in every 500 African-Americans have the sickle cell disease, the highest incidence of any group; although there is still no cure for sickle cell anemia, improved medical procedures, innovative pharmaceuticals, and increased knowledge have made life longer, less stressful, and less painful for persons afflicted with the disease;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate recognize the Metropolitan Seattle Sickle Cell Anemia Task Force for its important contribution in educating the citizens of the State of Washington about the serious health problem of sickle cell anemia, particularly the problem it poses in the African-American community, and urge all public and private entities to take every available avenue to educate the public about sickle cell anemia and its effects on the citizens of Washington.

I, Thomas Hoemann, Secretary of the Senate,
do hereby certify that this is a true and
correct copy of Senate Resolution 8679,
adopted by the Senate
April 3, 2007

THOMAS HOEMANN
Secretary of the Senate