

Date of Hearing: August 21, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON RULES

Blanca Pacheco, Chair

HR 61 (McKinnor) – As Introduced August 18, 2025

SUBJECT: Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month.

SUMMARY: Recognizes September 2025 as Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month; and, encourages Californians to join together in raising awareness and heightening public knowledge of this disease. Specifically, **this resolution** makes the following legislative findings:

- 1) Sickle cell disease is a severe, life-shortening, inherited disease that affects the red blood cells and impacts predominantly people of color. It is especially common in Africans and African-Americans, but the disease can also be found in other demographics, primarily in South and Central America, the Caribbean, Middle Eastern and Mediterranean countries, and India.
- 2) Sickle cell disease is a disease in which a person's body produces abnormally shaped red blood cells that resemble a crescent or sickle, and that do not last as long as normal, round red blood cells, which leads to anemia. The sickle cells also get stuck in blood vessels and block blood flow, resulting in vaso-occlusive crises, which can cause pain and organ damage.
- 3) Although the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that sickle cell disease affects more than 100,000 people in the United States, the exact number of people with sickle cell disease is unknown. Comprehensive and coordinated data collection efforts are needed to better understand and quantify the scope and impact of sickle cell disease on patients, communities, states, and the nation.
- 4) Individuals living with sickle cell disease experience severe pain, anemia, organ failure, stroke, and infection; in one recent study more than 30 percent of those diagnosed experienced premature death. Another recent study estimates that the life expectancy for individuals with sickle cell disease is 54 years.
- 5) Individuals living with sickle cell disease and their caregivers often report having to wait in emergency rooms for hours while experiencing severe pain crises, and receiving substandard care prior to discharge.
- 6) Many facilities do not have adequate clinical pathways and treatment protocols based on evidence based clinical guidelines pertaining to management of sickle cell disease patients, particularly those experiencing pain crises.
- 7) There is currently one curative therapy option for a limited number of individuals living with sickle cell disease, which is a bone marrow transplant from a matched donor, but the treatment may result in fertility issues.
- 8) It is imperative that there be greater awareness of this serious health condition, and more must be done to increase activity at the local, state, and national levels.

FISCAL EFFECT: This resolution is keyed non-fiscal by Legislative Counsel.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Michael Erke / RLS. / (916) 319-2800