

State of Arkansas
94th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2023

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1145

By: Representatives Scott, Pilkington, Vaught, K. Ferguson, Bentley

By: Senator F. Love

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE LUPUS AWARENESS DAY; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO CREATE LUPUS AWARENESS DAY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 1, Chapter 5, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

1-5-121. Lupus Awareness Day.

(a) The General Assembly finds that:

(1) Lupus is the result of an immune system that is unbalanced and can become destructive to any organ or tissue in the body and is an urgent national health issue;

(2) Lupus is unpredictable and potentially fatal, yet no satisfactory treatment exists;

(3) The health consequences of Lupus include heart attacks, strokes, seizures, and organ failure;

(4) National data indicates that more than one million five hundred thousand (1,500,000) Americans live with some form of lupus, with lupus affecting women nine (9) times more often than men, and eighty percent (80%) of newly diagnosed cases of lupus develop among women of childbearing age;

(5) Lupus disproportionately affects women of color, is two (2) to three (3) times more common among African-Americans, Hispanics and



Latinos, Asians, and Native Americans, and is generally more prevalent in minority populations, a health disparity that remains unexplained;

(6) The pain and fatigue associated with lupus can threaten one's ability to live independently, make it difficult to maintain employment, and lead a normal life;

(7) One (1) in three (3) people diagnosed with lupus is disabled by the disease and consequently receives support from government programs, including Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security Disability Insurance, and Social Security Supplemental Income; and

(8) The estimated average annual total of direct and indirect costs for an individual with lupus is thirty-three thousand two hundred and twenty three dollars (\$33,223), and for people who have the most serious form of lupus, medical costs can greatly exceed this amount, causing a significant economic, emotional, and social burden to an entire family and society.

(b) The purpose of Lupus Awareness Day is to promote public and health professional awareness among State and local health and human services officials, physicians, nurses, and other healthcare providers and increase knowledge concerning the causes and consequences of lupus, the importance of early diagnosis and appropriate management, and effective treatment and management strategies.

(c) April 23 of each year shall be known as "Lupus Awareness Day".

(d) Lupus Awareness Day shall not be a legal holiday but shall be a memorial day to be commemorated by the issuance of an appropriate proclamation by the Governor.

APPROVED: 1/30/23