

2020 Second Extraordinary Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 37

BY SENATOR MORRIS

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH. Designates October 22, 2020, as Cataract Awareness Day at the Louisiana State Capitol.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To designate October 22, 2020, as "Cataract Awareness Day" at the Louisiana State Capitol,
3 with a special emphasis on congenital or childhood cataracts.

4 WHEREAS, 2020 has been designated as the "Year of the Eye" by the American
5 Academy of Ophthalmology in the hope of better educating the public about cataracts and
6 other conditions and diseases of the eye; and

7 WHEREAS, cataracts are the world's leading cause of vision loss, and congenital
8 cataracts are rare but destructive if left undiagnosed or untreated; and

9 WHEREAS, a cataract is a clouding of the eye's lens that blocks or changes the
10 passage of light into the eye and through to the retina causing vision to become blurry or
11 dim; and

12 WHEREAS, cataracts are most often thought of as related to aging, which is
13 generally the case, but a newborn baby with congenital cataracts is a serious health issue as
14 well; and

15 WHEREAS, congenital cataracts can cause blindness in children if left undiagnosed
16 and untreated; and

17 WHEREAS, symptoms of congenital cataracts can include cloudy or blurred vision,
18 eyes that are not aligned, and eye movements that cannot be controlled. The symptoms may

1 affect one (unilateral) or both (bilateral) eyes but can be treated successfully with access to
2 quality eye care services; and

3 WHEREAS, congenital cataracts can be diagnosed at a newborn baby's first vision
4 screening with a red reflex test, which is not routinely given, but easily accomplished upon
5 request; and

6 WHEREAS, some congenital cataracts are caused by a genetic "fault" inherited from
7 the child's parents that cause the lens of the eye to develop abnormally; other causes are
8 certain infections experienced by the mother during pregnancy such as chickenpox, certain
9 birth defects such as Down Syndrome, or by an injury to the eye at birth; and

10 WHEREAS, treatments in babies and children vary and are dependent upon the
11 cataract size and location, involve a weighing of the risks and benefits, and can include any
12 of the following: lens surgery, an initial and continuing monitoring of the eye, contact lenses,
13 glasses, eye patches, and vision therapy; and

14 WHEREAS, cataracts in older adults are easily corrected with surgery and the
15 implanting of a new lens in the eye and are thought to be one of the most successful surgical
16 procedures, not only because of the satisfactory results, but also because of the low incidence
17 of complications; and

18 WHEREAS, with cataracts as the number one cause of blindness, the education of
19 the public is essential to diagnose this easily corrected cause, in both aging adults and in
20 newborn babies.

21 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
22 does hereby designate October 22, 2020, as "Cataract Awareness Day" at the Louisiana State
23 Capitol, with a special emphasis on congenital or childhood cataracts.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Mary Dozier O'Brien.

DIGEST

SR 37 Original

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