

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



Assemblée  
législative  
de l'Ontario

1ST SESSION, 42ND LEGISLATURE, ONTARIO  
70 ELIZABETH II, 2021

# Bill 255

## **An Act to proclaim Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Day and Thalassemia Awareness Day**

**Co-sponsors:**  
Mr. R. Cuzzetto  
Ms A. Khanjin

### **Private Members' Bill**

1st Reading      March 1, 2021  
2nd Reading  
3rd Reading  
Royal Assent



**An Act to proclaim Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Day  
and Thalassemia Awareness Day**

**Preamble**

Sickle cell disease and thalassemia are the most common inherited blood disorders in the world. As debilitating genetic diseases, they can cause severe chronic pain, organ dysfunction, bacterial infections, and many other serious complications. The lifespan of individuals with these disorders can be reduced by as much as 30 years.

Approximately five per cent of the world's population are healthy carriers of the genes for sickle cell disease or thalassemia, with the percentage as high as 25 per cent in some regions. Although Ontario now offers universal newborn screening for these disorders, important gaps remain in our understanding and knowledge about their exact prevalence in our province.

June 19 is recognized annually as World Sickle Cell Day by organizations such as the World Health Organization, African Union, and the United Nations, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. May 8 is recognized annually as World Thalassemia Day throughout the world and by the Thalassemia International Federation.

Proclaiming June 19 as Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Day and May 8 as Thalassemia Awareness Day in Ontario would increase awareness of these blood disorders in our province and dedicate a day to support individuals who have sickle cell disease or thalassemia and their families.

Therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:

**Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Day**

1 June 19 in each year is proclaimed as Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Day.

**Thalassemia Awareness Day**

2 May 8 in each year is proclaimed as Thalassemia Awareness Day.

**Commencement**

3 This Act comes into force on the day it receives Royal Assent.

**Short title**

4 The short title of this Act is the *Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Day and Thalassemia Awareness Day Act, 2021*.

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Bill proclaims June 19 in each year as Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Day and May 8 in each year as Thalassemia Awareness Day.