

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

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SENATE BILL 80*

Short Title: September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Ford (Primary Sponsor).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

February 11, 2021

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT DESIGNATING THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER OF EACH YEAR AS
3 CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS MONTH.

4 Whereas, childhood cancer is the number one disease-related killer of children in the
5 United States. Statistics show that 1 in 5 children are terminal at diagnosis, 3 in 5 suffer
6 life-altering impacts from treatment that significantly alter their quality of life, and 1 in 285 will
7 be diagnosed with cancer before the age of 20; and

8 Whereas, the incidence of childhood cancer is on the rise with an estimated 15,700
9 children each year or 43 per day diagnosed with cancer in the United States alone. Of those 43
10 children per day, seven will die; and

11 Whereas, the occurrence of cancer among adolescents and young adults is increasing
12 at a greater rate than any other age group, except for those over 65 years of age. The average age
13 of death for a child with cancer is eight, causing a child to lose 70 years of expected life; and

14 Whereas, despite these facts, childhood cancer research is vastly and consistently
15 underfunded. Less than 5% of the National Cancer Institute's budget is solely dedicated to
16 childhood cancer research. In 25 years, the FDA has initially approved only two drugs to treat
17 childhood cancer and one-half of all chemotherapies used to treat children's cancers are over 25
18 years old; and

19 Whereas, childhood cancers and adult cancers differ, yet the downsized adult cancer
20 protocols are still used on children which often results in devastating outcomes. The lack of
21 childhood cancer research tremendously impacts the lives of children and imposes significant
22 costs on their families and society, now and in the future; and

23 Whereas, many adult cancers can be diagnosed early; however, for 80% of children,
24 cancer has already spread to other areas of the body by the time it is diagnosed; and

25 Whereas, the causes of most childhood cancers are unknown and at the present,
26 cannot be prevented. The families of children who are or have been in treatment are working
27 tirelessly to change these alarming statistics; and

28 Whereas, to bring about awareness of childhood cancer, the State of North Carolina
29 should designate the month of September as "Childhood Cancer Awareness Month"; Now,
30 therefore,

31 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

32 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 103 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new
33 section to read:

34 **"§ 103-16. Childhood cancer awareness month.**

35 The month of September of each year is designated as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month
36 in North Carolina."



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SECTION 2. This act is effective when it becomes law.