



STATE REPRESENTATIVE KRISTINA SHELTON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: September 13th, 2021

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Rep. Kristina Shelton: Recognizing September as National Sickle Cell Awareness Month in Wisconsin

GREEN BAY - State Representative Kristina Shelton introduced a bipartisan-supported resolution today to the Wisconsin State Legislature to recognize September as National Sickle Cell Awareness Month. To commemorate this resolution, Rep. Shelton shared this message:

“I am excited to introduce this legislation to recognize September as National Sickle Cell Awareness Month today. Across the United States, more than 100,000 people are battling sickle cell disease, with approximately 800 of them residing in Wisconsin. As this disease predominantly affects communities of color, this inherited blood disorder leaves many Wisconsinites and Americans seeking multitudes of life-saving treatments, like frequent blood transfusions and other strategies to mediate side effects.”

Representative Shelton seeks to bring awareness to sickle cell disease in honor of her sister-in-law, Elodie Ontala Babongui, who is a sickle cell survivor and a patient advocacy liaison at Versiti Blood Center in Milwaukee. Ontala Babongui states:

“As a sickle cell survivor and patient advocate for individuals living with sickle cell, it’s exciting to see the resolution Recognizing September as National Sickle Cell Awareness Month. My hope is that this resolution will highlight the importance of sickle cell research, education, and advocacy as well as blood donation. We all play a role in advancing awareness of sickle cell disease and reducing the stigma of those living with the disease. I applaud the efforts of the Wisconsin State Legislature to join us in our work to address these critical needs.”

Versiti Blood Center of Wisconsin provided the following statement:

“One major treatment for sickle cell disease is blood transfusions. Organizations like Versiti Blood Center of Wisconsin have committed to increasing blood donations across our state to support sickle cell patients like Elodie Ontala Babongui, and will continue to host blood drives throughout this month to honor National Sickle Cell Awareness Month.”

Read more about Elodie’s battle here: <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/todays-faces-sickle-cell-disease/elodie-ontala-babongui>