

Commonwealth of Massachusetts



A Proclamation

His Excellency Governor Deval L. Patrick

Whereas Approximately 37 million people worldwide are blind, including 35,000 in the Commonwealth, and it is estimated that a child goes blind every minute; and

Whereas An additional 124 million people worldwide are severely visually impaired; and

Whereas The World Health Organization estimates that 75 percent of all blindness can be treated, cured, or prevented by cost-effective means; and

Whereas Nearly 20.5 million Americans age 40 and older are afflicted with cataracts, the leading cause of blindness in the United States; and

Whereas More than two-thirds of visually impaired adults in the United State are over 65 years of age and the prevalence of blindness increases rapidly in later years, particularly after age 75; and

Whereas The accomplishments of many blind Americans, such as Helen Keller, serve as a beacon of hope, and determination for other individuals; and

Whereas Every blind citizen of the Commonwealth has the right to lead a full and independent life, which includes productive employment in a competitive job market; and

Whereas We encourage our residents to recognize the achievements and contributions of those in the blind community who enrich the fabric of our Commonwealth,

Now, Therefore, I, Deval L. Patrick, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim October 2011 to be,

BLINDNESS AWARENESS MONTH

And urge all the citizens of the Commonwealth to take cognizance of this event and participate fittingly in its observance.

Given at the Executive Chamber in Boston, this thirtieth day of September, in the year two thousand and eleven, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

By His Excellency

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deval L. Patrick".

DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Francis Galvin".

WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN
SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH



God Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts