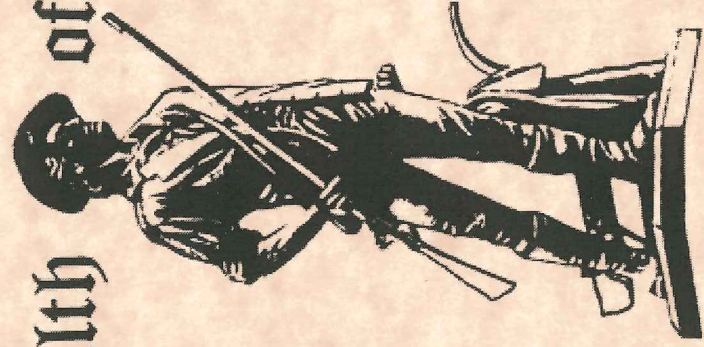


Commonwealth of Massachusetts



A Proclamation

His Excellency Governor Deval L. Patrick

Whereas Approximately 37 million people worldwide are blind, including 30,000 residents in the Commonwealth who are legally blind, and it is estimated that worldwide, 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 More than two-thirds of visually impaired adults in the United States 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 Americans who are blind such as Helen Keller, serve as a beacon of hope, and determination for other individuals; and

Whereas Every Commonwealth citizen who is blind has a right to lead a full and independent life, which includes appropriate educational services, productive employment and recreational opportunities; and

Whereas We recognize the importance of vision professionals such as Orientation and Mobility Specialists, Teachers of the Visually Impaired, Vision Rehabilitation Therapists, etc., to help support and assist citizens who are newly blinded, to remain independent in their homes and communities; and

Whereas We encourage our residents to recognize the achievements and contributions of Citizens who are blind within our communities and who enrich the fabric of our Commonwealth,

Now, Therefore, I, Deval L. Patrick, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim October 2014, 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 twenty-fifth day of September, in the year two thousand and fourteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and thirty-eighth.

By His Excellency

DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH

WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN
SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH

God Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts