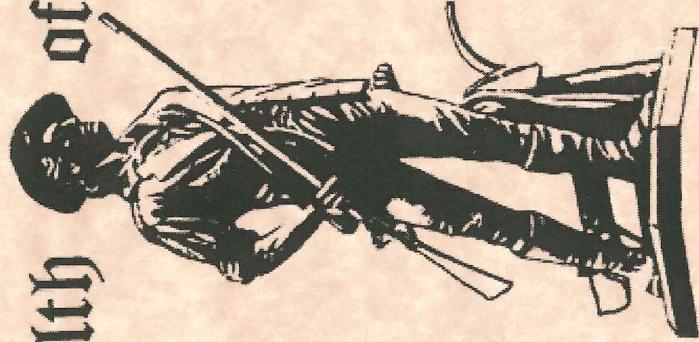


Commonwealth of Massachusetts



A Proclamation

His Excellency Governor Deval L. Patrick

- Whereas** Approximately 37 million people worldwide are blind, including 30,000 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 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

And Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts