

## Legislation Text

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Recognizing November 2015 as Epilepsy Awareness Month, in honor of individuals living with Epilepsy, their families, and those working to improve their quality of life.

WHEREAS, Epilepsy is a chronic disorder where people suffer from recurrent, unprovoked seizures. The seizures are triggered by abnormal electrical activity in the brain that results in involuntary changes in body movement, behavior, sensation and, in some cases, loss of consciousness; and

WHEREAS, Epilepsy is more than just seizures as it often has other accompanying conditions associated with it. Oftentimes, poor memory, mood issues, depression and anxiety go hand in hand with issues associated with epilepsy and need to be managed and thought of when caring for an individual with epilepsy; and

WHEREAS, Seizures can be caused as a result of a stroke, brain tumor, traumatic brain injury, loss of oxygen to the brain, some genetic disorders, neurological diseases, prenatal injury or brain infections. Even so, according to the Mayo Clinic, about half of diagnosed epilepsy cases have no known cause; and

WHEREAS, Up to 18% of people with epilepsy die from Sudden Unexplained Death in Epilepsy; and varies from one to nine of every 1,000 candidates for epilepsy surgery <<http://www.aesnet.org/pame/>>; and

WHEREAS, Annually, there are 150,000 new cases of epilepsy diagnosed in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it is estimated that 2.3 million adults in the United States have epilepsy. 30 to 40 percent will live with active seizures because treatments do not work; and

WHEREAS, One in 26 people in the U.S. will develop epilepsy at some point in their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, For many people with epilepsy, seizures can be effectively reduced or eliminated by medication, devices, dietary or other therapies and surgery; however, referrals to epilepsy centers for surgery can take 15 years or more; and

WHEREAS, Children and older adults are the fastest-growing segments of the population <<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm6145.pdf>> with new cases of epilepsy; however, the reason that they have epilepsy varies dramatically. In children, we see an overabundance of genetic and infectious causes of seizures. For older adults, stroke and Alzheimer's disease seem to be the common cause of epilepsy <<http://www.iom.edu/Activities/Disease/Epilepsy.aspx>> and seizures in this population; and

WHEREAS, There are common misconceptions and stigmas associated with epilepsy. Misconceptions are that epileptic patients suffer from mental illness or a mental disability. While people with a mental disability may experience seizures, most epileptic patients have normal or above-average intelligence. People with epilepsy can handle jobs with responsibility and stress and are in various professions; and

WHEREAS, One of the most significant quality of life issues associated with epilepsy is driving. In the United States, every state has a law that regulate driving for an individual with epilepsy and

<<http://www.epilepsyfoundation.org/resources/Driving-Laws-by-State.cfm>> what length of time they need to be seizure free to drive; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is one of six states that requires mandatory reporting by a physician of all patients with epilepsy to a medical board. Individuals need to be aware of these laws as there are, in some cases, criminal consequences for both physician and patients for their lack of awareness associated with it; and

WHEREAS, In Eastern Pennsylvania there are 110,000 people living with epilepsy, and an estimated 25,350 people in Philadelphia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize November 2015 as Epilepsy Awareness Month in honor of the individuals living with Epilepsy.