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By:  A. Johnson of Harris H.R. No. 801

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The observance of Vaccine Awareness and Advocacy Day at the State Capitol on March 29, 2023, provides an opportunity to highlight vaccination as a crucial public health strategy; and

WHEREAS, Vaccines exist at the intersection of personal and public health; a vaccinated individual receives beneficial protection for themselves and also imparts protection to their local community by preventing the spread of infection to others; and

WHEREAS, In the 20th century alone, smallpox killed approximately 300 million people worldwide; the advent of the smallpox vaccine resulted in global eradication by 1980; and

WHEREAS, Polio caused more than 16,000 cases of paralysis in the United States every year before the development of the polio vaccine in 1955; this horrible disease is now considered virtually nonexistent in the Americas; vaccines have also eradicated rubella and significantly reduced infection rates for measles, mumps, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, and chicken pox; and

WHEREAS, High vaccination rates in the United States have not only saved lives but kept the country largely free of many diseases that cause severe, enduring impacts to survivors in other parts of the world; vaccine access and equity are vital to ensure lasting herd immunity for Americans and avoid outbreaks of preventable diseases; and

WHEREAS, When enough people in a community become immune to an infectious disease, herd immunity slows the spread of that illness and protects those who do not have immunity, including newborn babies, the elderly, people undergoing chemotherapy, and others with weakened immune systems; while contributing to the well-being of individuals, herd immunity also keeps disease outbreaks from overwhelming health care systems; and

WHEREAS, The percentage of the population necessary to confer herd immunity varies among diseases; for instance, although approximately 80 percent of the population must be immune to prevent the spread of polio, measles is so highly communicable that it requires approximately 95 percent immunity to stop it from sweeping through a community; and

WHEREAS, Vaccines have been an enormous boon to humankind, reducing death and suffering for hundreds of millions of people around the world, but in order to ensure continued protection, we must remain vigilant about improving access among all members of society; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 88th Texas Legislature hereby recognize March 29, 2023, as Vaccine Awareness and Advocacy Day at the State Capitol.