

Proclamation



Jane Castor, Mayor

WHEREAS, named for Professor Hans Chiari (pronounced kee-AH-ree), an Austrian pathologist who first identified the disease in the 1890's, **Chiari Malformation** (CM) is a serious neurological disorder whereby the bottom part of the brain, the cerebellum, descends out of the skull causing crowding of the spinal cord, which puts pressure on both the brain and spine, and may block the flow of cerebrospinal fluid to and from the brain; and

WHEREAS, affecting approximately one in 1,000 Americans, Chiari Malformation often appears during adolescence or early childhood, and it can cause crippling headaches, neck pain, balancing problems, breathing difficulties including sleep apnea, numbness and weakness in the limbs, other health problems, and it is sometimes fatal, and it is categorized in order of severity, with Type I as the most common and having the least symptom's and Type IV being the rarest form; and

WHEREAS, the exact cause of Chiari Malformation is unknown and can be acquired or congenital whereby structural defects in the brain and spinal cord occur during fetal development, and while there is no cure for the disorder, treatments may include physiotherapy, dietary changes, analgesic medications, and in some cases, surgical management including posterior fossa decompression, and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) is the primary organization that funds research on CM to find alternative options, identify the cause of the disorder to improve treatment and prevention plans, and to increase awareness; and

WHEREAS, it is vital to raise Chiari Malformation understanding and the critical need for continued research, and to enlighten health care professionals about CM, and since patients often must travel great distances to see specialists, it is important to encourage more physicians and neurosurgeons to make CM a priority in their medical practice which will ensure the safety and an enhanced quality of life for their patients; and

WHEREAS, annually, September has been designated as *National Chiari Malformation Awareness Month*, and along with the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, nonprofit organizations throughout the nation such as The Chiari Project and Conquer Chiari Walk Across America, strive to advocate, educate, support, bring about awareness, and raise funding for research, treatments, and ultimately, a cure.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jane Castor, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim September 2023, as

“NATIONAL CHIARI MALFORMATION AWARENESS MONTH”

in the city of Tampa, Florida, and urge all citizens to thank the health care industry for their professional attention to the care of Chiari Malformation patients and their families, and endeavor to support nonprofit organizations and patient groups in their efforts to promote research and bring awareness regarding this devastating disorder.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 15th day of August 2023.



Jane Castor

Mayor