

# Commonwealth of Massachusetts



## A Proclamation

His Excellency Governor Deval L. Patrick

**Whereas** Diethylstilbestrol (DES) is a synthetic estrogen, which was manufactured in a laboratory in 1938 and prescribed to pregnant women to prevent miscarriages and avoid other pregnancy problems between 1938-1971; and

**Whereas** During this period an estimated 5-10 million pregnant women and the children born of these pregnancies were exposed to DES; and

**Whereas** In 1953, published research illustrated that DES did not prevent miscarriages or premature births; and

**Whereas** In 1971, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a Drug Bulletin advising physicians to stop prescribing DES to pregnant women as a result of a 1971 study which linked DES to a rare vaginal cancer in girls and young women who had been exposed to DES in the womb; and

**Whereas** Since 1971, efforts to bring attention to these findings have increased and a growing number of women have reported having been exposed to DES; and

**Whereas** Research has shown that exposure to DES puts both women and men at an increased risk for certain health problems and complications, including breast cancer, clear cell adenocarcinoma, ectopic pregnancy and pre-term delivery, infertility, reproductive tract structural differences; and

**Whereas** Through public awareness, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts seeks to inform our residents about the serious consequences of DES exposure and about the challenges faced by those affected,

**Now, Therefore, I, Deval L. Patrick**, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim July 17 - July 23, 2011, to be

## DES AWARENESS WEEK

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 sixth day of July, in the year two thousand and eleven, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and thirty-fifth.



By His Excellency

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deval L. Patrick'.

DEVAL L. PATRICK  
GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Francis Galvin'.

WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN  
SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH

God Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts