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**For Immediate Release**

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**Rep. Nydia M. Velazquez Declares 34th Annual National Eye Donor Month**

**Washington, D.C. (March 1, 2017)** -- U.S. Representative Nydia M. Velazquez (D - NY 7th District) entered a proclamation into the Congressional Record on March 1, 2017, commemorating the 34th Annual National Eye Donor Month.

Last year, the Eye Bank Association of America’s (EBAA) member eye banks made possible over 74,000 sight-restoring corneal transplants. During National Eye Donor Month, EBAA and its member banks promote eye donation awareness, encourage individuals to register as eye, organ and tissue donors, honor donors and their families and celebrate cornea recipients.

In her proclamation, Rep. Velazquez expressed her gratitude to donors and member eye banks for their contributions to the development of treatment and cures for corneal blindness. “In 2015 alone, EBAA member eye banks recovered 118,752 corneas from 66,065 donors and provided 74,173 corneas for transplant in the U.S. and around the world.” she said.

Rep. Velazquez commended EBAA member eye banks and EBAA for their efforts in sight restoration. She also encouraged her colleagues to support their local eye banks and urged all Americans to “give the gift of sight” by registering to become an eye, organ, and tissue donor. Kevin Corcoran, EBAA President and CEO, expressed gratitude to Rep. Velazquez for her acknowledgment of the EBAA and its member eye banks and their work toward the greater goal of restoring sight worldwide.

To view Rep. Velazquez’s complete proclamation and other materials for National Eye Donor Month, please visit the EBAA’s 2017 [National Eye Donor Month web page](http://restoresight.org/what-we-do/calendar-of-events/commemorations-and-observances/national-eye-donor-month/2017-through-my-eyes-art-contest/).

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**About the Eye Bank Association of America**

*The Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA), established in 1961, is the oldest transplant association in the nation and sets standards, provides education, and engages in advocacy to support eye donation, and cornea transplantation and research. EBAA has led the transplantation field with the establishment of medical standards for eye banking, and comprehensive training and certification programs for eye bank personnel. Over 90 member eye banks operate in the United States, Canada, and Asia. These eye banks made possible 79,304 sight-restoring corneal transplants in 2015. To learn more, visit* [*www.restoresight.org*](http://www.restoresight.org)*.*

Eye Bank Association of America • 1101 17th Street, NW, Suite 400 • Washington, DC 20036 • www.restoresight.org