

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 52

BY SENATOR CORTEZ AND REPRESENTATIVE STUART BISHOP

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To recognize May 2014 as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month and to memorialize the Congress of the United States to enact legislation to provide additional funding for research in order to find a treatment and cure for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

WHEREAS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, is more commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease; and

WHEREAS, ALS is a fatal neurodegenerative disease characterized by degeneration of cell bodies of the lower motor neurons in the gray matter of the anterior horns of the spinal cord; and

WHEREAS, the initial symptom of ALS is usually weakness of the skeletal muscles, especially those of the extremities; and

WHEREAS, as ALS progresses, the patient typically experiences difficulty in swallowing, talking, and breathing; and

WHEREAS, ALS eventually causes muscles to atrophy and the patient becomes a functional quadriplegic; and

WHEREAS, ALS does not affect mental capacity of the patient, such that the patient remains alert and aware of surroundings and aware of the loss of motor functions and the inevitable outcome of continued deterioration and death; and

WHEREAS, on average, patients diagnosed with ALS survive only two to five years from the time of diagnosis; and

WHEREAS, despite the catastrophic consequences of a diagnosis of ALS, the disease currently has no known cause, means of protection, or cure; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that military veterans are at a sixty percent greater risk of developing ALS than those who have not served in the military; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs has promulgated regulations to establish a presumption of service connection for ALS thereby presuming that the development of ALS was incurred or aggravated by a veteran's service in the military; and

WHEREAS, a national ALS registry, administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is currently identifying cases of ALS in the United States and may become the largest ALS research project ever undertaken; and

WHEREAS, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month increases the awareness of the circumstances of living with ALS and acknowledges the terrible impact this disease has not only on the patient, but also on the family and community of anyone receiving such a diagnosis; and

WHEREAS, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month also increases awareness of research being done to eradicate this dire disease.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize May 2014 as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the Congress of the United States to enact legislation to provide additional funding for research in order to find a treatment and cure for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES