

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 80

BY SENATOR BROOME

A RESOLUTION

To designate May 3, 2014, as "Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Day in Louisiana" and to commend the efforts of Ronnie Edwards in raising pancreatic cancer awareness.

WHEREAS, every year over 45,000 people will be diagnosed and over 38,000 people will die of pancreatic cancer in the United States and one in every 72 men and women born today will be diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, there has been no significant improvement in survival rates in the last forty years and pancreatic cancer research is still in the earliest scientific stages; and

WHEREAS, the incidence and death rate for pancreatic cancer are increasing, and pancreatic cancer is anticipated to move from the fourth to the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States by 2020 and possibly as early as 2015; and

WHEREAS, when symptoms of pancreatic cancer generally present themselves, it is often too late for an optimistic prognosis, and the average survival rate is only five to seven months; and

WHEREAS, people of African-American descent are diagnosed at a higher frequency than the rest of the population; and

WHEREAS, additional risk factors include but are not limited to smoking, obesity, recent on-set diabetes, family history of pancreatic cancer and pancreatitis; and

WHEREAS, the federal government invests significantly less money in pancreatic cancer research than it does in any of the other leading cancer killers, and pancreatic cancer research constitutes only approximately 2% of the National Cancer Institute's federal research funding, a figure far too low given the severity of the disease, its mortality rate and how little is known about how to arrest it; and

WHEREAS, Ronnie Edwards, a six-year member of the Baton Rouge Metro Council, was diagnosed with Stage 4 pancreatic cancer on December 27, 2013; and

WHEREAS, she determined early on that she wouldn't succumb to her diagnosis and relying heavily on her faith and prayers, she has firmly decided that she is going to beat the odds; and

WHEREAS, she is already showing significant signs of progress and is nearing a partial remission, which means the cancer is shrinking; and

WHEREAS, Ronnie Edwards attributes part of her progress to many changes she has made in her lifestyle and now wants to use her experience to try to raise awareness about the disease and about healthy living habits; and

WHEREAS, as part of her public health advocacy efforts, she is hosting a forum at 6 p.m. on April 30 at Delmont Service Center, where residents can meet with various doctors, who specialize in women's health, dentistry, family health, pediatrics and primary care; and

WHEREAS, she is also helping to host a Community Health Fair from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on May 3 at the service center, where residents can get screening for blood pressure, as well as information about fitness, nutrition and stress and has also organized a panel of cancer survivors who will share their stories; and

WHEREAS, Ronnie Edwards believes that promoting healthy education has become part of her calling, particularly as a public servant, and wants to inspire other people with serious medical issues to have hope; and

WHEREAS, the good health and well-being of the residents of Louisiana are enhanced as a direct result of increased awareness about pancreatic cancer and research into early detection, causes and effective treatments.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby designate May 3, 2014, as "Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Day" in Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Ronnie Edwards is hereby commended for her efforts in raising pancreatic cancer awareness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana hereby urges citizens to educate themselves about pancreatic cancer and the need for research funding, early detection methods, effective treatments, and prevention programs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Ronnie Edwards.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE