

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 226

By Berke

A RESOLUTION designating May 2011 as “Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month” in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), commonly known as “Lou Gehrig’s Disease,” is a progressive and fatal neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord; and

WHEREAS, when motor neurons die, the ability of the brain to initiate and control muscle movement is lost and never regained; and

WHEREAS, as ALS progresses, patients lose the ability to walk, eat, speak, move, and breathe, and require constant care; and

WHEREAS, ALS does not usually affect its sufferers’ mental capacities, and those with the disease are often alert and aware while being trapped inside the prisons of their bodies; and

WHEREAS, ALS commonly occurs in adulthood, usually in people between forty and seventy years of age, with the peak age of onset being approximately fifty-six years of age; and

WHEREAS, every ninety minutes in the United States, someone is diagnosed with ALS, and someone suffering from the disease dies every ninety minutes; and

WHEREAS, the disease has no boundaries and can strike anyone, putting the entire population at risk; however, American veterans have a higher incidence of contracting ALS than the general population. Gulf War veterans, in particular, have twice the incidence of ALS compared to the rest of the population; and

WHEREAS, eighty-five percent (85%) of patients diagnosed with ALS survive between two and five years from the time they first noticed muscle weakness; and

WHEREAS, more than 440 Tennesseans have ALS; and

WHEREAS, ALS has no known cause, prevention, or cure; and

WHEREAS, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month will increase public awareness of ALS patients' circumstances, will acknowledge the terrible impact of this disease on patients and their families, and will recognize the need for ALS research and for quality treatment, care, and support of patients and families living with ALS; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that May 2011 is hereby designated as " Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month" in Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this body encourages continued research for treatments of and a cure for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis and the improvement of care and support of patients and their families.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.