**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO DECLARE FEBRUARY 26 THROUGH MARCH 4, 2018, AS “EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK” IN THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA TO COINCIDE WITH NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK AND TO DECLARE THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2018, AS “EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS DAY” IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, the 2018 theme of National Eating Disorders Week is “Let’s Get Real,” and will focus on expanding the conversation around eating disorders to include the diverse perspectives of the millions of people affected. Eating disorders are shrouded in stigma, secrecy, and stereotypes. The goal of this year’s campaign is to shine a light on these deadly illnesses, dispel misinformation, and connect people with the support they need to recover. Additionally, it will encourage people to share their stories and experiences with disordered eating and body image struggles, highlight the importance of screenings for early detection and intervention of eating disorders, and present eating disorders as a public health issue that affects all kinds of people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, size, or background; and

Whereas, an estimated four thousand adolescents in South Carolina struggle with an eating disorder, and the South Carolina Eating Disorders Association (SCEDA) provides critical support for families and friends, raises community awareness, offers educational programs, and promotes quality care and early intervention; and

Whereas, eating disorders are serious conditions that are potentially life‑threatening and have a great impact on both a person’s physical and emotional health. Too often, signs and symptoms are overlooked. Many individuals, families, and communities are unaware of the devastating mental and physical consequences of eating disorders, as well as the pressures, attitudes, and behaviors which shape them. The National Eating Disorders Association strives to address the many misconceptions regarding eating disorders, and to highlight the availability of resources for treatment and support; and

Whereas, eating disorders usually appear in adolescence and are associated with substantial psychological problems, including depression, substance abuse, and suicide. They are serious illnesses, not lifestyle choices. In fact, anorexia has the highest mortality rate of any mental illness; and

Whereas, many cases of eating disorders go undetected. Less than one‑third of youths with eating disorders will receive treatment. Eating disorders experts have found that prompt intensive treatment significantly improves the chances of recovery; therefore, it is important for educators, medical providers, parents, and community members to be aware of the warning signs and symptoms of eating disorders; and

Whereas, National Eating Disorders Awareness Week is a collaborative effort consisting primarily of volunteers, including eating disorder professionals, health care providers, students, educators, social workers, and individuals committed to raising awareness of the dangers surrounding eating disorders and the need for early intervention and treatment access. On Saturday, February 17, the 6th Annual National Eating Disorders Association walk will occur at the University of South Carolina to help bring more attention to the problem; and

Whereas, the General Assembly of South Carolina recognizes the vital work of National Eating Disorders Awareness Week in promoting public and media attention to the seriousness of eating disorders and for working to improve education about their biological and environmental causes, as well as how to help those who are struggling with these debilitating diseases. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, declare February 26 through March 4, 2018, as “Eating Disorders Awareness Week” in the State of South Carolina to coincide with National Eating Disorders Awareness Week and declare Thursday, March 1, 2018, as “Eating Disorders Awareness Day” in South Carolina.

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