**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO DECLARE FEBRUARY 26 THROUGH MARCH 4, 2017, AS “EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK” IN THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA TO COINCIDE WITH NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK AND TO DECLARE THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2017, AS “EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS DAY” IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

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, in the United States, twenty million women and ten million men suffer from a variety of clinically significant eating disorders at some time in their lives, a challenge that can be serious, indeed potentially life‑threatening, as it affects emotional and physical health; and

Whereas, forty to sixty percent of elementary school girls ages six to twelve are concerned about their weight or about becoming too fat, while ninety‑five percent of those who have eating disorders are between the ages of twelve and twenty‑five; and

Whereas, a review of nearly fifty years of research confirms that anorexia nervosa has the highest mortality rate of all psychiatric disorders. For females between fifteen and twenty‑four years old who suffer from anorexia nervosa, the mortality rate associated with the illness is twelve times higher than the death rate of all other causes of death. Eating disorders can lead to major medical complications, including cardiac arrhythmia, cognitive impairment, certain cancers, osteoporosis, infertility, kidney failure, and death; and

Whereas, despite the prevalence of eating disorders, they continue to receive inadequate research funding. Research spending in 2011 on Alzheimer’s averaged $88 per affected individual, on schizophrenia, $81; on autism, $44. For eating disorders, the average research spending per affected individual was just $0.93; and

Whereas, problems like anorexia, bulimia, and compulsive overeating are often misunderstood, stigmatized, underfunded, and undertreated, resulting in embarrassment and secrecy that contribute to the underreporting of eating disorders; and

Whereas, associated with substantial psychological problems, including depression, substance abuse, and suicide, eating disorders affect persons of every race, color, gender, and socioeconomic category. Media pressures, as well as genetic, social, and familial factors, are also related to eating disorders; and

Whereas, because many insurance companies disallow or limit reimbursements for treating eating disorders, many doctors feel pressured to discharge patients with anorexia nervosa prematurely, which places patients in life‑threatening situations. Although these disorders are treatable when diagnosed early and treated sufficiently, many insurance companies continue to make a common practice of delaying care, which leads to more severe symptoms at admission and premature termination of treatment for eating disorders, factors that are linked to high rates of relapse; and

Whereas, treatment for an eating disorder in the United States ranges from $500 to $2,000 per day. The average monthly cost for inpatient treatment is $30,000, with necessary estimated inpatient care lasting from three to six months. The cost of outpatient treatment, including therapy and medical monitoring, can exceed $100,000; and

Whereas, this year’s National Eating Disorders Awareness Week, with the theme of “It’s Time to Talk About It,” seeks to direct public and media attention to the seriousness of eating disorders and improve education about the causes and signs of eating disorders and the means of recovery; and

Whereas, concerned with preserving and protecting the health of this great state’s citizens, the South Carolina Senate encourages citizens and policymakers to learn more about eating disorders and the obstacles to treatment so that all of us may be better equipped to help our people overcome and prevent these life‑threatening diseases. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, declare February 26 through March 4, 2017, as “Eating Disorders Awareness Week” in the State of South Carolina to coincide with National Eating Disorders Awareness Week and declare Thursday, March 2, 2017, as “Eating Disorders Awareness Day” in South Carolina.

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