**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE MAY 12, 2019, AS “MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS AWARENESS DAY” AND THE MONTH OF MAY AS “MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS AWARENESS MONTH” IN SOUTH CAROLINA IN ORDER TO HELP SPREAD AWARENESS OF THE DISEASE AND THE NEED FOR INCREASED RESEARCH FUNDING AND TO SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS LIVING WITH MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS.

Whereas, myalgic encephalomyelitis, sometimes called chronic fatigue syndrome, is a neuroimmune disease characterized by overwhelming fatigue, “brain fog,” pain, post‑exertional malaise, headaches, cardiac symptoms, immune dysfunction, hypometabolism, lack of energy production at a cellular level, orthostatic intolerance, severe dizziness and balance problems, increased morbidity, and a higher risk of suicide due to lack of treatment and neglect; and

Whereas, perhaps the most common chronic disease, myalgic encephalomyelitis afflicts an estimated 15,000 to 38,000 South Carolina residents of all ages, races, and sexes; 836,000 to 2.5 million Americans and 17 to 20 million worldwide; and

Whereas, myalgic encephalomyelitis has been found by the National Academy of Medicine to be “a serious, chronic, complex, and systemic disease that frequently and dramatically limits the activities of affected patients.” One‑quarter of patients are housebound or bedridden, while one‑half to three‑quarters of patients are unable to work or attend school, and patients are often ill for years or for a lifetime; and

Whereas, the economic impact of myalgic encephalomyelitis is estimated to be 257 million dollars to 363 million dollars per year in South Carolina in medical expenses and lost productivity and 17 billion dollars to 24 billion dollars per year in the United States; and

Whereas, the National Academy of Medicine has stated that there is a “paucity of research to date,” with grossly inadequate research funding that “does not reflect disease burden, prevalence, and economic cost to society”; and

Whereas, given the lack of research, there is no diagnostic test nor federally approved treatments by the Food and Drug Administration. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that eighty‑four percent of those with myalgic encephalomyelitis are either misdiagnosed or not diagnosed at all, and that most patients have no access to doctors with expertise in the disease; and

Whereas, increased public awareness of the severity of myalgic encephalomyelitis will help alleviate any misplaced stigma and discrimination and will lead to increased funding for research, treatment, and clinical education; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives urge state agencies, medical service providers, healthcare agencies, research facilities, medical schools, and federal agencies to work toward increasing clinical care, supportive care, and medical‑education and research funding for myalgic encephalomyelitis. The House of Representatives also encourages schools, colleges, and media organizations to inform the public about myalgic encephalomyelitis. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize May 12, 2019, as “Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Awareness Day” and the month of May as “Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Awareness Month” in South Carolina in order to help spread awareness of the disease and the need for increased research funding and to support individuals living with myalgic encephalomyelitis.

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