**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE OCTOBER 5, 2019, AS “OSTOMY AWARENESS DAY” IN SOUTH CAROLINA IN ORDER TO HELP SPREAD AWARENESS AND PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE OF THE SURGERY AND TO HELP THE PUBLIC UNDERSTAND THAT “OSTOMIES ARE LIFE SAVERS.”

Whereas, an ostomy is a type of surgery that creates an opening, a stoma, in the abdomen that allows for the removal of bodily waste when a person has lost the normal function of digestive or urinary systems. Loss of function in these systems can come from birth defects, colorectal cancer, bladder cancer, Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis, and other medical conditions. Ostomies may also be necessary in cases where an individual has sustained severe abdominal or pelvic trauma from an accident or during military service. For an individual who undergoes the procedure, the bodily waste will then pass through the stoma into an ostomy ‘pouch’ located on the outside of the body, or, in the case of continent diversion surgeries, an internal surgically created reservoir; and

Whereas, approximately seven hundred and twenty‑five thousand to one million Americans have an ostomy, with approximately one hundred thousand new ostomy procedures performed each year; and

Whereas, ostomy or continent diversion surgery can occur at any age and does not lower life expectancy; and

Whereas, largely through the efforts of United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc., and its over three hundred affiliated support groups, Americans needing these surgeries are becoming more aware of the opportunities for education, mutual aid, advocacy, and support that are of such great benefit to them and their families; and

Whereas, the United States of America celebrates Ostomy Awareness Day on the first Saturday of October each year; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is committed to increasing public understanding of an ostomy, and to eventually help dispel the fear of those about to undergo this surgery, as well as to ease the fear that confronts their families. This day can serve as a reminder to the public that this is a life‑saving and life‑restoring surgery; and

Whereas, the proper care and advancement of knowledge about bowel and urinary diversion surgery as a result of birth defects, disease, injury, and other digestive disorders remains an important responsibility in the state’s public and private sectors; and

Whereas, to increase public acceptance of ostomy surgery and continent diversion surgery, as well as to help the public better understand that “Ostomies are life savers,” this year’s first Saturday, October 5, 2019, is being recognized as “Ostomy Awareness Day.” Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize October 5, 2019, as “Ostomy Awareness Day” in South Carolina in order to help spread awareness and public acceptance of the surgery and to help the public understand that “Ostomies are life savers.”

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