

## Senate Resolution 336

By: Senators Albers of the 56th, Shafer of the 48th, Black of the 8th, Hufstetler of the 52nd, Stone of the 23rd and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing March as the annual NMO Awareness Month in Georgia; and for other  
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, neuromyelitis optica/neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorder, more commonly  
4 known as NMO, is an uncommon life-threatening autoimmune disease syndrome of the  
5 central nervous system that affects the optic nerves, spinal cord, and brain; and

6 WHEREAS, individuals with NMO develop optic neuritis, which causes pain in the eye and  
7 vision loss, and transverse myelitis, which causes weakness, numbness, and sometimes  
8 paralysis of the arms and legs, along with sensory disturbances and loss of bladder and bowel  
9 control; and

10 WHEREAS, in the disease process of NMO, for reasons that are not yet clear, immune  
11 system cells and antibodies attack and destroy myelin cells in the optic nerves and the spinal  
12 cord; and

13 WHEREAS, in the past, NMO was considered to be a severe variant of multiple sclerosis  
14 (MS), but recent discoveries have established that NMO is a separate disease that differs  
15 from MS in the severity of its attacks and its tendency to solely strike the optic nerves and  
16 spinal cord at its earlier stages; and

17 WHEREAS, an antibody known as NMO-Immunoglobulin G seems to be present in  
18 approximately 70 percent of those with NMO and is not found in people diagnosed with MS  
19 or other similar conditions, and this test can be ordered by any primary care physician; and

20 WHEREAS, NMO can be confused with MS and other autoimmune conditions, and because  
21 these diseases must be treated in different ways, public awareness is critical to early detection  
22 and intervention on behalf of these various patient populations; and

23 WHEREAS, finding a cure for NMO has the potential to help solve other autoimmune  
24 diseases, including MS, lupus, Sjögren's, and many more; and

25 WHEREAS, diagnosed NMO residents of Georgia are among those affected by NMO, as  
26 well as those who might still be undiagnosed; and

27 WHEREAS, the Guthy-Jackson Charitable Foundation is organizing March as the annual  
28 awareness month for NMO in perpetuity; and

29 WHEREAS, the Guthy-Jackson Charitable Foundation along with patients, caregivers,  
30 scientists, clinicians, industries, and regulatory communities in the State of Georgia will  
31 participate in that observance.

32 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
33 recognize March as the annual NMO Awareness Month in Georgia in perpetuity.

34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
35 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the public and the  
36 press.