

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 131

BY SENATOR CORTEZ

A RESOLUTION

To recognize May 2012 as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month.

WHEREAS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or ALS is better known as Lou Gehrig's disease; and

WHEREAS, ALS is a fatal neurodegenerative disease characterized by degeneration of cell bodies of the lower motor neurons in the gray matter of the anterior horns of the spinal cord; and

WHEREAS, the initial symptom of ALS is weakness of the skeletal muscles, especially those of the extremities; and

WHEREAS, as ALS progresses the patient experiences difficulty in swallowing, talking, and breathing; and

WHEREAS, ALS eventually causes muscles to atrophy and the patient becomes a functional quadriplegic; and

WHEREAS, ALS does not affect a patient's mental capacity, so that the patient remains alert and aware of his or her loss of motor functions and the inevitable outcome of continued deterioration and death; and

WHEREAS, on average, patients diagnosed with ALS only survive two to five years from the time of diagnosis; and

WHEREAS, ALS has no known cause, means of prevention, or cure; and

WHEREAS, research indicates that military veterans are at a sixty percent or greater risk of developing ALS than those who have not served in the military; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs implemented regulations to establish a presumption of service connection for ALS thereby presuming that the development of ALS was incurred or aggravated by a veteran's service in the military; and

WHEREAS, a national ALS patient registry, administered by the Centers for Disease Control, is currently identifying cases of ALS in the United States and may become the single largest ALS research project ever created; and

WHEREAS, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month increases the public's awareness of ALS patients' circumstances and acknowledges the terrible impact this disease has not only on the patient but on his or her family and the community and recognizes the research being done to eradicate this horrible disease.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana hereby recognizes May 2012 as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE