

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-FOUR

**JOINT RESOLUTION DESIGNATING MAY 2024 AS
AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS AWARENESS MONTH**

WHEREAS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as ALS, is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord; and

WHEREAS, the life expectancy for an individual with ALS is between 2 and 5 years after the date on which the individual receives an ALS diagnosis; and

WHEREAS, ALS occurs throughout the world with no racial, ethnic, gender or socioeconomic boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the 2 different types of ALS are sporadic ALS and familial ALS; and

WHEREAS, sporadic ALS is the most common form of motor neuron disease in the United States, accounts for between 90% and 95% of all cases of ALS in the United States and may affect any individual in any location; and

WHEREAS, familial ALS, also known as FALS, is inherited and accounts for between 5% and 10% of all cases of ALS in the United States; and

WHEREAS, there is a 50% chance that each of the offspring of an individual with familial ALS will inherit the gene mutation for familial ALS and develop the disease; and

WHEREAS, the onset of ALS often involves muscle weakness or stiffness, and the progression of ALS results in the further weakening, wasting and paralysis of the muscles of the limbs and trunk and the muscles that control vital functions, including speech, swallowing and breathing; and

WHEREAS, on average, the period between the date on which an individual first experiences symptoms of ALS and the date on which the individual is diagnosed with ALS is about one year; and

WHEREAS, ALS can strike individuals of any age but predominantly strikes adults, and it is estimated that tens of thousands of individuals in the United States have ALS at any given time; and

WHEREAS, based on studies of the population of the United States, slightly more than 5,600 individuals in the United States are diagnosed with ALS each year, and 15 individuals in the United States are diagnosed with ALS each day; and

WHEREAS, the majority of individuals with ALS die of respiratory failure; and

WHEREAS, a military veteran is approximately twice as likely to be diagnosed with ALS as is a member of the general public in the United States; and

WHEREAS, as of the date of introduction of this resolution, there is no cure for ALS; and

WHEREAS, the spouses, children and other family members of individuals living with ALS provide support to those individuals with love, day-to-day care and more; and

WHEREAS, an individual with ALS, and the caregivers of such an individual, can be required to bear significant costs for medical care, equipment and home health care services for the individual as the disease progresses; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirty-first Legislature now assembled in the Second Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to recognize May 2024 as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month. We affirm the dedication of the Legislature to helping to work toward securing cures and better treatments for ALS, recognize the challenges that individuals with ALS face on a daily basis and commend the dedication of the family members, friends, organizations, volunteers, researchers and caregivers across the United States who are working to improve the quality and length of life of persons with ALS.