SENATE RESOLUTION

8684

By Senator Fortunato

WHEREAS, There are nearly 7,000 diseases and conditions considered rare (each affecting fewer than 200,000 Americans) in the United States, according to the National Institutes of Health; and

WHEREAS, While each of these diseases may affect small numbers of people, rare diseases as a group affect 25,000,000-30,000,000 Americans and 750,000 Washingtonians; and

WHEREAS, Many rare diseases are serious and debilitating conditions that have a significant impact on the lives of those affected; and

WHEREAS, The Food and Drug Administration has approved drugs and biologics for more than 880 rare disease indications, but millions of Americans still have rare diseases for which there is no approved treatment; and

WHEREAS, Individuals and families affected by rare diseases often experience problems such as diagnosis delay, difficulty finding a medical expert, and lack of access to treatments or ancillary services; and

WHEREAS, While the public is familiar with some rare diseases and sympathetic to those affected, many patients and families affected by less widely known rare diseases bear a large share of the burden of funding research and raising public awareness to support the search for treatments; and

WHEREAS, Thousands of residents of Washington are among those affected by rare diseases since nearly one in 10 Americans has a rare disease; and

WHEREAS, The Orphan Drug Act has encouraged and promoted the discovery and development of biopharmaceuticals designed to treat and even cure rare diseases; and

WHEREAS, Many of the world-leading academic institutions, academic medical centers, biotech companies, and pharmaceutical companies conducting research and seeking cures for rare diseases are doing so in Washington;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington state Senate commend the endeavor of finding cures for rare diseases and encourage all Washingtonians to recognize the struggle of those afflicted and their families and commit to a future of hope through compassionate care for our neighbors and scientific discovery.