

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO.2003-4618, by Representatives Benson, Ahern, Crouse, Wood, Schual-Berke, Campbell, Schindler, Bush, Gombosky and Kirby

WHEREAS, Multiple sclerosis (MS) is an unpredictable neurological disease that affects nearly 400,000 people in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Approximately 200 people each week are diagnosed with MS, more than one person every hour; and

WHEREAS, The unpredictable physical and emotional effects, such as blurred vision, loss of balance, poor coordination, slurred speech, tremors, numbness, extreme fatigue, even paralysis and blindness, can last the rest of their lives; and

WHEREAS, Onset of symptoms occurs most often between the ages of 20 and 50, at the prime of life when the impact of a chronic illness can be most damaging to family and career; and

WHEREAS, MS can be a very costly illness to an individual in terms of lost wages estimated annually at \$22,000, the cost of health care estimated annually at \$21,500, as well as time spent by family members providing care; and

WHEREAS, Approximately 150-220 per 100,000 people in Washington state have MS, making the incidence rate in this state one of the highest in the nation; and

WHEREAS, The National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Greater Washington Chapter and Inland Northwest Chapter services more than 35,368 people, including 8,843 with multiple sclerosis and nearly 26,525 others whose lives are directly impacted, ranging from spouses, children, and relatives to friends, coworkers and caregivers, in Washington state counties; and

WHEREAS, Every month the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Greater Washington Chapter and Inland Northwest Chapter responds to hundreds of requests for information from people newly diagnosed with the disease, their families, friends, employers, and health professionals; and

WHEREAS, The Pacific Northwest Alliance of MS Centers works in collaboration with community clinicians, nurses, researchers, and persons affected by Multiple Sclerosis to organize ongoing patient educational lecture series; and

WHEREAS, The Pacific Northwest Alliance of MS Centers is working toward conducting collaborative clinical research to develop and maintain a common patient data base; and

WHEREAS, The MS clinics in the region are working towards sharing information about specific resources available, educational events, research opportunities, emerging findings in MS research, and ideas for improving MS patient care; and

WHEREAS, The Pacific Northwest is a region with one of the highest concentrations of MS in the country, and there is great demand for specialized MS care;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the state of Washington recognize the dedicated service of those who are working to combat MS and those who are providing comfort and care to persons affected by MS.

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of
Resolution 4618 adopted by the House of Representatives
February 13, 2003

Cynthia Zehnder, Chief Clerk