

SENATE RESOLUTION
8645

By Senators Kohl-Welles, Deccio, West, Thibaudeau and Fairley

WHEREAS, Colorectal cancer is second to lung cancer in the number of deaths it causes in the United States; and

WHEREAS, In 2003 across the United States, an estimated 147,500 new cases of colorectal cancer will be diagnosed, and 57,100 Americans are expected to die of colorectal cancer; and

WHEREAS, In Washington state, it is estimated that 2,700 new cases of colorectal cancer will be found, and 1,000 people will die in 2003; and

WHEREAS, Colorectal cancer can affect anyone of any age, race, or sex. Nine out of ten diagnoses will occur in people aged 50 years and older. Men are slightly more likely to develop colorectal cancer and die of the disease than women. Also, African-Americans are 10% more likely to be diagnosed with colorectal cancer than Caucasians and 30% more likely to die of the disease; and

WHEREAS, Despite its high incidence, colorectal cancer is one of the most detectable and, if found early, most treatable forms of cancer. 90% of those diagnosed early while the cancer is still localized survive more than five years. Sadly, only 37% of all colorectal cancers are detected early enough for survival to occur. When the cancer is diagnosed at a more advanced stage, having spread to the surrounding region, the five-year survival rate drops from 90% to 65%. When diagnosed at an advanced stage, having spread to distant organs, the five-year survival rate is only 9%; and

WHEREAS, Early detection is still our best defense against this devastating disease, regular screening can prevent over half of all colon cancer deaths in the United States. Yet, a majority of Americans are not being screened on a regular basis in enough time to catch the cancer while it is still localized. In a recent survey, the Centers for Disease Control found that only 40% of all Americans reported that they had ever used the most inferior of screening methods and just 42% had ever had a more advanced screening. This compares to 85% of all women who had been screened for breast cancer; and

WHEREAS, Low screening rates for colorectal cancer are due to many factors, including a lack of public awareness about colorectal cancer and of the benefits of regular screening, negative attitudes towards the screening procedures, the complete lack of symptoms in most cases, and the absence of social support for openly discussing and doing something about this particular disease; and

WHEREAS, On November 19, 1999, the United States Senate designated March as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month and on October 3, 2000, the United States House of Representatives passed House Concurrent Resolution 133, legislation that recognizes the impact of colorectal cancer and urges action be taken;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate recognize both the victims of cancer and those fighting for a cure in March, Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, and urge Washingtonians to become more aware of the risks facing them regarding this disease and actively fight it by getting regular screenings for colorectal cancer; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the American Cancer Society.

I, Milton H. Doumit, Jr., Secretary of the Senate,
do hereby certify that this is a true and
correct copy of Senate Resolution 8645,
adopted by the Senate
March 20, 2003

MILTON H. DOUMIT, JR.
Secretary of the Senate