

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 36

WHEREAS, Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic, often disabling disease that attacks the central nervous system, which is comprised of the brain, spinal cord, and optic nerves. MS damages the nerve-insulating myelin sheath that surrounds and protects the brain. The damage to the myelin sheath slows down or blocks messages between the brain and the body; and

WHEREAS, the cause of MS remains unknown; however, having a first-degree relative, such as a parent or sibling, with MS significantly increases a person's risk of developing the disease. According to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, it is estimated that there are approximately 250,000 to 350,000 persons in the United States who are diagnosed with MS. This estimate suggests that approximately 200 new cases are diagnosed each week; and

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest for the state to establish a Multiple Sclerosis Task Force in order to identify and address the unmet needs of persons with MS, and develop ways to enhance their quality of life:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-seventh General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby create the Missouri Multiple Sclerosis Task Force; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the mission of the Task Force shall be to fully consider and make recommendations in a report to the General Assembly on:

(1) Developing strategies to identify and address the unmet needs of persons with MS in order to enhance the quality of life of persons with MS by maximizing productivity and independence, and addressing the emotional, social, and vocational challenges of persons with MS; and

(2) Developing strategies to provide persons with MS greater access to various treatments and other therapeutic options that may be available; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall consist of the following members:

(1) Two members of the Senate, one to be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and one to be appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;

(2) Two members of the House of Representatives, one to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and one to be appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives;

(3) The Director of the Department of Health and Senior Services, or his or her designee, to serve as a member and provide technical assistance to the task force;

(4) Two neurologists licensed to practice in this state, with one appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and one appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, from a list of recommendations by the Department of Health and Senior Services;

(5) Two Missouri regional members of a national organization with experience in helping people affected by MS through funding cutting-edge research, driving change through advocacy, facilitating professional education and providing programs and services that help people and the families living with MS, with one appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and one appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, from a list of recommendations by the Department of Health and Senior Services;

(6) Two persons who represent agencies that provide services or supports to individuals with MS in this state, with one appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and one appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, from a list of recommendations by the Department of Health and Senior Services;

(7) Two persons who have MS, with one appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and one appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, from a list of recommendations by the Department of Health and Senior Services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the staffs of Senate Research, House Research, and the Joint Committee on Legislative Research shall provide such legal, research, clerical, technical, and bill drafting services as the Task Force may require in the performance of its duties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force will report its recommendations and findings to the Missouri General Assembly by January 15, 2015; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall terminate by either a majority of members voting for termination, or by February 1, 2015, whichever occurs first; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Multiple Sclerosis Task Force is authorized to function during the legislative interim between the Second Regular Session of the Ninety-Seventh General Assembly and the First Regular Session of the Ninety-Eighth General Assembly through January 1, 2015, as authorized by State v. Atterbury, 300 S.W.2d 806 (Mo. 1957); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for the Director of the Department of Health and Senior Services.

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