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**Introduced by Senator Haynes**

April 29, 2002

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Senate Joint Resolution No. 44—Relative to Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 44, as introduced, Haynes. Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month.

This measure would proclaim the month of May 2002 as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month, and would memorialize the President and Congress of the United States to enact legislation to provide additional funding for research in order to find a treatment and a cure for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or ALS is better
- 2 known as Lou Gehrig's disease; and
- 3 WHEREAS, ALS is a fatal neurodegenerative disease
- 4 characterized by degeneration of cell bodies of the lower motor
- 5 neurons in the gray matter of the anterior horns of the spinal cord;
- 6 and
- 7 WHEREAS, The initial symptom of ALS is weakness of the
- 8 skeletal muscles, especially those of the extremities; and
- 9 WHEREAS, As ALS progresses the patient experiences
- 10 difficulty in swallowing, talking, and breathing; and
- 11 WHEREAS, ALS eventually causes muscles to atrophy and the
- 12 patient becomes a functional quadriplegic; and
- 13 WHEREAS, ALS does not affect a patient's mental capacity, so
- 14 that the patient remains alert and aware of his or her loss of motor

1 functions and the inevitable outcome of continued deterioration  
2 and death; and

3 WHEREAS, ALS occurs in adulthood, most commonly  
4 between the ages of 40 to 70 years, with the peak age about 55  
5 years, and affects men two to three times more often than women;  
6 and

7 WHEREAS, Over 5,000 new ALS patients are diagnosed  
8 annually; and

9 WHEREAS, On average, patients diagnosed with ALS only  
10 survive two to five years from the time of diagnosis; and

11 WHEREAS, ALS has no known cause, prevention, or cure; and

12 WHEREAS, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month  
13 increases the public's awareness of ALS patients' circumstances  
14 and acknowledges the terrible impact this disease has not only on  
15 the patient but on his or her family as well, and recognizes the  
16 research being done to eradicate this horrible disease; now,  
17 therefore, be it

18 *Resolved by the Senate and Assembly of the State of California,*  
19 *jointly,* That the Legislature hereby proclaims the month of May  
20 2002 as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month in  
21 California; and be it further

22 *Resolved,* That the Legislature of the State of California  
23 memorializes the President and Congress of the United States to  
24 enact legislation to provide additional funding for research in  
25 order to find a treatment and eventually a cure for amyotrophic  
26 lateral sclerosis; and be it further

27 *Resolved,* That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of  
28 this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United  
29 States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, each Senator  
30 and Representative from California in the Congress of the United  
31 States, and the United States Secretary of Health and Human  
32 Services.

