

## **Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 162**

### **RESOLUTION CHAPTER 165**

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 162—Relative to Alzheimer’s and Brain Awareness Month and The Longest Day.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 13, 2024.]

#### **LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST**

SCR 162, Allen. Alzheimer’s and Brain Awareness Month and The Longest Day.

This measure would recognize the month of June 2024 as Alzheimer’s and Brain Awareness Month, would recognize June 20, 2024, as The Longest Day in California, and would urge all Californians to wear purple on this day to help spread global awareness of the Alzheimer’s Association’s vision of a world without Alzheimer’s disease. The measure would recognize the importance of ongoing state and federal support for, and investment in, innovative neurological research and cutting-edge treatments for neurological disorders.

WHEREAS, The month of June 2024 has been declared Alzheimer’s and Brain Awareness Month to help educate the public on this debilitating disease and the need to increase efforts to combat its human and economic costs; and

WHEREAS, The summer solstice, June 20, 2024, has been declared The Longest Day, with teams around the world coming together to honor the strength, passion, and endurance of people facing Alzheimer’s disease with a day of activity and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, Alzheimer’s disease, a progressive neurodegenerative brain disorder, tragically robs individuals of their memories and leads to cognitive decline resulting in functional, emotional, and behavioral impairment; and

WHEREAS, California has 719,700 residents living with Alzheimer’s disease, which is 12 percent of adults over 65 years of age, more than any other state in the nation, and the state’s population is projected to grow by 38 percent in the next decade, reaching 840,000 individuals affected by 2025; and

WHEREAS, California’s Medi-Cal program this year will spend \$3.5 billion on skilled nursing care and home- and community-based supports for beneficiaries living with Alzheimer’s disease, quickly climbing to \$5 billion in Medi-Cal spending within eight years; and

WHEREAS, Alzheimer’s disease is always fatal and today it is the fifth leading cause of death in California; and

WHEREAS, Alzheimer's disease is a family disease impacting 1.6 million California spouses, partners, children, and other relatives who provide unpaid assistance to a loved one; and

WHEREAS, California caregivers devote 1.864 billion hours of unpaid assistance to family members valued at over \$44 billion in nongovernment financial support; and

WHEREAS, Individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers need acknowledgment, support, and services to meet their needs over the lengthy progression of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias; and

WHEREAS, California's 2015 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey found that 27.1 percent of people with memory problems in California live alone; and

WHEREAS, African Americans, Latinos, and women are disproportionately impacted by Alzheimer's disease, having higher prevalence rates than the general population; and

WHEREAS, On average, a person with Alzheimer's disease lives four to eight years after diagnosis, but can live as long as 20 years, depending on other factors; and

WHEREAS, Age is the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer's disease, which today has no known cause, cure, or prevention; and

WHEREAS, The discovery that Alzheimer's disease begins 20 years or more before the onset of symptoms suggests that there is a substantial window of time in which we may be able to intervene in the progression of the disease; and

WHEREAS, Scientific advances are already helping the field to make progress in understanding the progression of the disease. For example, advances in the identification of biomarkers for Alzheimer's disease make it possible to identify individuals who have beta-amyloid accumulation in the brain and who may qualify for clinical trials of experimental treatments that aim to reduce the accumulated beta-amyloid and in doing so prevent or delay the onset of symptoms; and

WHEREAS, Biomarkers also enable earlier detection of the brain changes of Alzheimer's disease, giving those affected the opportunity to address modifiable risk factors that may slow or delay cognitive decline; and

WHEREAS, Biomarkers are already accelerating the development of new treatments by making it possible for clinical trials to specifically recruit individuals with the brain changes that experimental therapies target. In addition, biomarker basic science and other research advances offer the potential to expand the field's understanding of which therapies or combination of therapies may be most effective at which points in the Alzheimer's disease continuum; and

WHEREAS, Millions of children and adults suffer from devastating diseases or injuries that are currently incurable, including brain and spinal cancer, COVID-19 and its impact on brain and mental health, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injuries, blindness, Lou Gehrig's disease, HIV/AIDS, multiple sclerosis, Huntington's disease, opioid and

other addictions, mental health disorders, and more than 70 other diseases and injuries; and

WHEREAS, Medical science has recently discovered new ways to attack chronic diseases and injuries. The cure and treatment of these conditions can potentially be accomplished through the use of new regenerative medical therapies, nanomedicine, medical devices, neurophotonics, artificial intelligence (AI), neuroimaging technologies, virtual augmented realities, supercomputing, immunotherapies, and cellular therapies, including those using a special type of human cells, known as stem cells; and

WHEREAS, These lifesaving medical breakthroughs can happen only if adequate funding is made available to advance development of new diagnostics and therapeutics based on already existing patents and technologies that have been, or could be, developed by universities, federal laboratories, veterans hospitals, nonprofit organizations, private companies, and hospitals in California and other states; and

WHEREAS, A child or adult in about one-half of California's families has suffered or will suffer from a serious, often critical or terminal medical condition that could potentially be treated or cured by facilitating innovation from the hospitals, universities, federal laboratories, veterans hospitals, and companies engaged in clinical practice; and

WHEREAS, In addition, California is home to nearly 1.9 million veterans, the largest veteran population in the country. Traumatic injuries causing neurological problems such as hearing impairment, vision loss, traumatic brain injury, and spinal cord injury are present at much higher rates in veterans than in the general population. Mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder are much more common in veterans; and

WHEREAS, In these cases of chronic illness or when patients face a medical crisis, the health care system may simply be unable to meet the needs of patients or control spiraling costs, unless there is a system to fast track advanced therapeutics and diagnostics into clinical setup, which could reduce the cost of neurological disorders by rapidly introducing lifesaving devices, device-drug combinations, and pharmaceuticals. Unfortunately, the federal government is not providing adequate funding necessary for the urgent translation of these therapeutics and diagnostics. This critical funding currently prevents the rapid advancement of research that could benefit millions of Californians; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring,* That the Legislature recognizes June 2024 as Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month, recognizes Thursday, June 20, 2024, as The Longest Day in California, and urges all Californians to wear purple on that day to help spread global awareness of the Alzheimer's Association's vision of a world without Alzheimer's disease; and be it further

*Resolved,* That the Legislature recognizes the importance of ongoing state and federal support for, and investment in, innovative neurological research and cutting-edge treatments for neurological disorders; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.