**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO DECLARE TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2013, AS “AUTISM AWARENESS DAY” IN THE PALMETTO STATE AND TO ENCOURAGE ALL SOUTH CAROLINA CITIZENS TO SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES AFFECTED BY AUTISM.

Whereas, often accompanied by behavioral challenges, autism is a complex neurobiological disorder that inhibits a person’s ability to communicate and develop social relationships. Autism spectrum disorders are diagnosed in one in eighty‑eight children, affecting four times as many boys as girls in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the disorder is a national public health crisis, the cause and cure of which remain unknown; and

Whereas, an estimated three million individuals in the United States and tens of millions worldwide are affected by autism; and

Whereas, although a cure for autism has not been found, persons with autism can be helped to reach their greatest potential. Accurate, early diagnosis and the resulting appropriate education and intervention are vital to the future growth and development of the affected individual; and

Whereas, many agencies and organizations, both private and public, have dedicated years of service in their ongoing efforts to advocate for the rights, humane treatment, and appropriate education of all persons with autism; and

Whereas, one such organization, Autism Speaks, will commemorate World Autism Awareness Day and Autism Awareness Month by sponsoring Light It Up Blue on April 2, 2013, during which day buildings and landmarks around the world will turn their lights blue in support of those affected by autism; and

Whereas, in 2012, more than three thousand iconic buildings and landmarks in more than fifty countries on six continents turned their lights blue in commemoration of World Autism Awareness Day, and the Senate encourages the people of the Palmetto State to follow suit during this year’s event as they are able; and

Whereas, it is entirely appropriate for the South Carolina Senate to pause in its deliberations to underline the complex disability that is autism and to express its support for individuals and families affected by this disorder. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, declare Tuesday, April 2, 2013, as “Autism Awareness Day” in the Palmetto State and encourage all South Carolina citizens to support individuals and families affected by autism.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Autism Speaks.

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