

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 6025

A RESOLUTION designating the month of April as Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month.

WHEREAS, Parkinson's disease is the second most common neurodegenerative disease in the United States, second only to Alzheimer's disease; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated that Parkinson's disease affects over 1,000,000 people in the United States, including thousands of Kansans; and

WHEREAS, The exact cause and progression of the disease is still unknown; and

WHEREAS, There is no objective test for Parkinson's disease, which results in a high rate of delayed diagnosis or misdiagnosis; and

WHEREAS, Symptoms of Parkinson's disease vary from person to person and can include tremors, slowness, difficulty with balance, swallowing, chewing and speaking, rigidity, cognitive problems, dementia, mood disorders, such as depression and anxiety, constipation, skin problems, and sleep disruptions; and

WHEREAS, Medications mask some symptoms of Parkinson's disease for a limited amount of time each day, often with dose-limiting side effects; and

WHEREAS, Ultimately, the medications and treatments lose their effectiveness, generally after four to eight years, leaving the person unable to move, speak or swallow; and

WHEREAS, There is no cure, therapy or drug to slow or halt the progression of Parkinson's disease; and

WHEREAS, Increased education and research are needed to aid in early and accurate diagnosis, and to help find more effective treatments or a cure for Parkinson's disease; and

WHEREAS, The federal government, through the National Institute of Health, the Department of Defense Neurotoxin Exposure Treatment Parkinson's Research Program, the Veterans Affairs Parkinson's Disease Research, Education and Clinical Center, and other agencies, supports vital work to better understand Parkinson's disease and to find new treatments; and

WHEREAS, In Kansas, many people associated with the Kansas House of Representatives are dealing with, or have encountered, Parkinson's disease, such as past members: The Honorable J. Basil Dannebohm and the Honorable Ramon Gonzales; current members: Representative Pete DeGraaf and Representative Brenda Dietrich's husband, Gerald, who are both currently fighting the disease; also Speaker of the House Executive Assistant, Sharon Chandler, whose husband recently passed away from complications associated with Parkinson's disease; and many others who have relatives affected by Parkinson's disease; and

WHEREAS, In the fight against Parkinson's, Kansans can be proud. The University of Kansas Medical Center's Parkinson's Disease Center, under the direction of Dr. Rajesh Pahwa, M.D., and his outstanding staff, is designated as a National Parkinson's Foundation Center of Excellence. Kansas also has many excellent support groups and organizations, such as the National Parkinson's Foundation — Heartland in Leawood; the Parkinson's Program at Meadowlark Hills in Manhattan, under the direction of Michelle Haub; and many other advocates who are working to promote Parkinson's disease awareness, education and patient support: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Kansas: That we designate the month of April as Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month. We will continue to support research to find better treatments and, eventually, a cure for Parkinson's disease.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the HOUSE, and was adopted by that body

Speaker of the House.

Chief Clerk of the House.