H. Res. 1759

_in the House of Representatives, U. S.,_


Whereas Edward Verne Roberts was born January 23, 1939;
Whereas Roberts acquired polio as an adolescent in 1953 and had to spend vast expanses of time in an iron lung;
Whereas Roberts’ career as an advocate began when a high school administrator threatened to deny him a diploma because he had not completed driver’s education and physical education;
Whereas in 1962 Roberts was admitted to the University of California at Berkeley (UC Berkeley) where he became the first student with a severe disability to attend UC Berkeley;
Whereas when his search for housing at the university met resistance, the director of the campus hospital offered Roberts a room in an empty wing, which Roberts accepted on the condition that it was considered a dormitory space;
Whereas other students with significant disabilities joined Roberts in the empty wing over the next few years and called themselves the “Rolling Quads”;
Whereas at UC Berkeley the Rolling Quads began advocating for curb cuts, opening access to the wider community and
creating the first student-led disability services program at a university in the Nation;

Whereas the student program led to the creation of the Nation’s first center for independent living;

Whereas Roberts assumed leadership of the Center for Independent Living, Berkeley and guided its development as a model for disability advocacy and self-help services across the Nation and around the world;

Whereas in 1975 Roberts was appointed the Director of the California Department of Rehabilitation;

Whereas in 1983 Roberts co-founded the World Institute on Disability, an organization committed to eliminating barriers to full social integration for persons with disabilities;

Whereas Ed Roberts died from natural causes on March 14, 1995; and

Whereas Ed Roberts was a leader and champion in the disability rights movement: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the designation of an “Ed Roberts Day”; and

(2) acknowledges the accomplishments of Ed Roberts in helping reduce barriers, increase access, and improve lives for persons with disabilities.

Attest:

Clerk.