Public Law 102-418
102d Congress

Joint Resolution

To designate the week of October 4, 1992, through October 10, 1992, as "Mental Illness Awareness Week".

Oct. 14, 1992
[S.J. Res. 287]

Whereas mental illness is a problem of grave concern and consequence in the United States and it is widely, but unnecessarily, feared and misunderstood;

Whereas on an annual basis 40,000,000 adults in the United States suffer from clearly diagnosable mental disorders, including mental illness, alcohol abuse, and drug abuse, which create significant disabilities with respect to employment, school attendance, and independent living;

Whereas more than 17,000,000 United States citizens are disabled for long periods of time by schizophrenia, manic depressive disorder, and major depression;

Whereas 33 percent of homeless persons suffer serious, chronic forms of mental illness;

Whereas alcohol, drug, and mental disorders affect almost 22 percent of adults in the United States in any 1-year period;

Whereas mental illness interferes with the development and maturation of at least 12,000,000 of our children;

Whereas a majority of the 29,000 American citizens who commit suicide each year suffer from a mental or an addictive disorder;

Whereas our growing population of elderly persons faces many obstacles to care for mental disorders;

Whereas 20 to 25 percent of AIDS patients will develop AIDS-related cognitive dysfunction and as many as two-thirds of AIDS patients will show neuropsychiatric symptoms before they die;

Whereas mental illnesses, alcohol abuse, and drug abuse result in staggering costs to society, estimated to be in excess of $249,000,000,000 in direct treatment and support and indirect costs to society, including lost productivity;

Whereas the Federal research budget committed to the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration represents only about 1 percent of the direct treatment and support costs of caring for persons with alcohol, drug, and mental disorders;

Whereas mental illnesses are increasingly treatable disorders with excellent prospects for amelioration when properly recognized;

Whereas mentally ill persons and their families have begun to join self-help groups seeking to combat the unfair stigma of mental illness, to support greater national investment in research, and to advocate an adequate continuum of care from hospital to community;

Whereas in recent years there have been unprecedented major research developments bringing new methods and technology to the sophisticated and objective study of the functioning of the brain and its linkages to both normal and abnormal behavior;

Whereas research in recent decades has led to a wide array of new and more effective modalities of treatment (somatic, psychosocial, and service delivery) for some of the most incapaci-

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tating forms of mental illness, including schizophrenia, major affective disorders, phobias, and phobic disorders;

Whereas appropriate treatment of mental illness has been demonstrated to be cost effective in terms of restored productivity, reduced use of other health services, and lessened social dependence; and

Whereas recent and unparalleled growth in scientific knowledge about mental illness has generated the current emergence of a new threshold of opportunity for future research advances and fruitful application to specific clinical problems: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the week of October 4, 1992, through October 10, 1992, is designated as "Mental Illness Awareness Week". The President is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

Approved October 14, 1992.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S.J. Res. 287:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 138 (1992):
June 26, considered and passed Senate.
Sept. 30, considered and passed House.