

2011-J715

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim September 2011, as Chiari Malformation and Syringomyelia Awareness Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, The State of New York takes great pride in participating in months of awareness of important health issues; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, it is the sense of this Legislative Body to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim September 2011, as Chiari Malformation and Syringomyelia Awareness Month in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Chiari Malformation is a condition where part of the brain, the cerebellar tonsils, descends out of the skull and crowds the spinal cord; and

WHEREAS, First identified by Hans Chiari in the 1890s, the cause is unknown and is believed to be primarily a congenital condition; and

WHEREAS, Chiari Malformation leads to a secondary condition, Syringomyelia, in some people; it is a neurological condition where a fluid filled cyst, or syrinx, forms in the spinal cord; and

WHEREAS, The syrinx expands the spinal cord, sometimes to more than twice its normal diameter, and stretches the nerve tissue paper thin; and

WHEREAS, Chiari Malformation is the leading cause of Syringomyelia, so some people must deal with two sets of problems; and

WHEREAS, Chiari Malformation symptoms include but are not limited to: severe headaches brought on by coughing and straining; trouble swallowing and sometimes speaking; loss of fine motor control; and balance problems; and

WHEREAS, Syringomyelia symptoms include but are not limited to: extreme pain in neck and shoulders; loss of bladder and bowel control; numbness in hands and feet, unable to feel hot and cold; and weakness, stiffness and pain in arms and legs; and

WHEREAS, Chiari Malformation and Syringomyelia affect more than 300,000 people in the United States; and

WHEREAS, These devastating diseases are diagnosed by using a combination of MRI, neurological exam, physician's judgment, and other tests; patients often go five or more years before being properly diagnosed; and

WHEREAS, A study of over 300 Chiari Malformation and Syringomyelia patients found approximately 57% had at one time been told by a doctor they were suffering from a mental or emotional problem; many patients undergo serious brain surgery in an attempt to stop symptoms from progressing; and

WHEREAS, Research has shown that surgery can improve symptoms with approximately an 80% success rate; Chiari Malformation and Syringomyelia can place a tremendous physical, mental, emotional, and economic strain on patients and their families; and

WHEREAS, Chiari Malformation and Syringomyelia Awareness Month provides an opportunity to focus on these significant and complex diseases, to provide information on and raise public awareness of the causes, effects and treatments, and to underscore important education and research efforts surrounding Chiari Malformation and Syringomyelia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim September 2011, as Chiari Malformation and Syringomyelia Awareness Month in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York.