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ACR-33 Lymphedema Awareness Day. (2019-2020)

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 33

CHAPTER 26

Relative to Lymphedema Awareness Day.

[Filed with Secretary of State April 04, 2019.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 33, Gloria. Lymphedema Awareness Day.

This measure would declare March 6, 2019, as Lymphedema Awareness Day in California.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, Lymphedema (LE) is a serious chronic disease that plagues nearly 10 million Americans who are either born with the condition or who develop it as a result of trauma, surgical insult, radiation therapy, or a combination of these factors; and

WHEREAS, LE is a disease that occurs when the body's natural lymphatic drainage system is damaged or blocked or does not develop properly and the lymphatic fluid within a given area, such as the arm, leg, torso, head, or neck, is unable to drain properly. This results in extreme swelling that can cause pain and significantly impairs mobility, function, and the quality of life for the affected person; and

WHEREAS, The National Cancer Institute predicts a 42-percent increase in cancer survivors 65 years of age or older by 2020, and as many as 1.5 to 3 million Medicare beneficiaries who are cancer survivors will require treatment for their LE; and

WHEREAS, Worldwide, the World Health Organization estimates that over 150 million people have secondary LE and an additional 120 million people are infected with lymphatic filariasis, which leads to lymphedema; and

WHEREAS, Underdiagnosing and undertreating LE patients cost health care providers and health care coverage policies or plans, including the federal Medicare Program, untold millions of dollars every year because, if LE is left untreated, the potential for infection is greatly increased, possibly spreading in the course of a few hours, and requiring immediate treatment on an emergency basis; and

WHEREAS, Several thousand Californians will be put at risk or will develop LE each year as a consequence of cancer treatment, surgical insult, or physical trauma; and

WHEREAS, Without professional treatment and self-care, the accumulation of lymphatic fluid results in the gross distention of the lymph-filled body part and chronic infections that can become life-threatening without prompt treatment; and

WHEREAS, LE often leaves its victims disfigured, as well as physically and emotionally disabled; and

WHEREAS, Many LE patients are breast cancer survivors who have undergone surgery or lymph node removal, often in combination with subsequent radiation therapy. However, similar treatments for colon cancer, melanoma, and uterine, ovarian, and cervical cancer can also cause LE; and

WHEREAS, Persons at risk for LE must apply a regimen of self-care to prevent or delay the onset of symptoms that is nearly as rigorous as self-care requirements for patients already afflicted with LE; and

WHEREAS, Timely diagnosis and treatment are often not available to patients, particularly those in rural areas, making LE more difficult to manage with more negative health consequences due to delays in diagnosing and treating the condition; and

WHEREAS, It is important to recognize the tireless advocates and health care providers who spend so much of their time and resources battling this painful and destructive condition that affects so many members of the community; and

WHEREAS, World Lymphedema Day is recognized on March 6 of each year; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature declares March 6, 2019, as Lymphedema Awareness Day in California; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.