

By Senator Detert

23-01157-12

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing February 24, 2012, as "Dave Bitner Day" in Florida and May 2012 as "Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month" in Florida.

WHEREAS, David I. "Dave" Bitner, of Monticello, a former member of the Florida House of Representatives, died September 8, 2011, after a courageous, months-long battle with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), better known as "Lou Gehrig's Disease," and

WHEREAS, ALS is a progressive, neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord, with early symptoms that include weakness of the skeletal muscles, especially involving the arms and legs, and difficulty swallowing, talking, and breathing, and

WHEREAS, ALS eventually causes muscles to atrophy, rendering the patient a functional quadriplegic, and

WHEREAS, because ALS does not affect mental acuity, individuals with ALS remain alert and aware of their loss of motor functions and the inevitability of continued deterioration and death, and

WHEREAS, the average survival rate for an individual with ALS is 2 to 5 years after diagnosis, and

WHEREAS, research indicates that military veterans are at least twice as likely to develop ALS than those who have not served in the military, and

WHEREAS, ALS has no known cause, means of prevention, or cure, and

WHEREAS, the inaugural Tallahassee Walk to Defeat ALS,

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30 sponsored by the Florida Chapter of the ALS Association, will be  
31 held on February 24, 2012, and

32 WHEREAS, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month was  
33 conceived as a means of raising public awareness of the  
34 circumstances of ALS patients and the terrible impact of the  
35 disease on the patient, the patient's family, and the community  
36 in which they live, and increasing support for biomedical  
37 research on ALS to find the cause or causes of ALS, to develop  
38 an understanding of the mechanisms involved in the progression  
39 of the disease, and to develop an effective treatment, NOW,  
40 THEREFORE,

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42 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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44 That February 24, 2012, is recognized as "Dave Bitner Day"  
45 in Florida, to be commemorated by the inaugural Tallahassee Walk  
46 to Defeat ALS, and May 2012 is recognized as "Amyotrophic  
47 Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month" in Florida.