

103<sup>D</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# S. J. RES. 177

To designate the period of October 2, 1994, through October 8, 1994, as  
“Mental Illness Awareness Week”.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 24 (legislative day, FEBRUARY 22), 1994

Mr. SIMON (for himself, Mr. AKAKA, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. FORD, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HELMS, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. MATHEWS, Mr. METZENBAUM, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. REID, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mr. WOFFORD, Mr. CONRAD, and Mr. DASCHLE) introduced the following joint resolution; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

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## **JOINT RESOLUTION**

To designate the period of October 2, 1994, through October 8, 1994, as “Mental Illness Awareness Week”.

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 American adults experience 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 11,200,000 American citizens are diagnosed with schizophrenia, manic depressive disorder, and

major depression, and these individuals are often disabled for long periods of time;

Whereas one-third of homeless persons in the United States suffer serious, chronic forms of mental illness;

Whereas mental disorders affect almost 22 percent of American adults during any 1-year period, and substance abuse disorders affect an additional 6 percent of American adults during that same period;

Whereas mental illness interferes with the development and maturation of between 7,000,000 and 12,000,000 American children;

Whereas anxiety disorders, the most prevalent of the mental disorders, affect 12.6 percent of the American adult population, phobia disorders affect 10.9 percent of that population, obsessive-compulsive disorder affects 2.1 percent of that population, and panic disorder affects 1.3 percent of that population;

Whereas 1.1 percent of the population of the United States develops schizophrenia during their lifetimes, resulting in 2,000,000 Americans being affected by schizophrenia during any given year, occupying an estimated 100,000 hospital beds on any given day;

Whereas an estimated 6 percent of American women and an estimated 3 percent of American men will experience a major depression in their lifetime, and at least another 6 percent of American women have dysthymia, a less severe but often more chronic form of depression;

Whereas a majority of the 30,000 American citizens who commit suicide each year have a mental or an addictive disorder;

Whereas the growing population of American elderly persons faces many obstacles to receiving care for mental disorders;

Whereas 20 to 25 percent of persons with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (hereafter referred to as "AIDS") in the United States develop AIDS-related cognitive dysfunction, and as many as two-thirds of persons with AIDS in the United States 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 \$300,000,000,000, in direct treatment and support costs, and in indirect costs to society, including lost productivity;

Whereas the Federal research and services budget committed to the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute of Drug Abuse, the National Institute of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse, and the Center for Mental Health Services represents only approximately 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, and are excellent prospects for amelioration when properly recognized;

Whereas persons with mental illness and their families have begun to join self-help groups and have worked to reduce the unfair stigma of mental illness to support greater national investment in research and services and to advocate a full 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 of services and systems of care for persons with mental illness;

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

Whereas appropriate treatment of mental illness has been demonstrated to be cost-effective by restoring productivity, reducing use of other health services, and lessening social dependence; and

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

1        *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*  
 2        *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*  
 3        That the period of October 2, 1994, through October 8,  
 4        1994, is designated as “Mental Illness Awareness Week”,  
 5        and the President is authorized to issue a proclamation  
 6        calling upon the people of the United States to observe  
 7        that period with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and  
 8        activities.

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