

(H. B. 1216)

(No. 52)

(Approved August 13, 2005)

## **AN ACT**

To declare and establish the month of March of each year as the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Awareness Month.”

### **STATEMENT OF MOTIVES**

The National Center for Diseases Control (CDC,) based on a revision of the definition of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, has adopted the following definition: Chronic Fatigue Syndrome is defined as a subgroup of chronic fatigue, being the latter a broader category, which is defined as unexplained fatigue lasting for six months or longer. In turn, chronic fatigue is treated as a subgroup of prolonged fatigue, which is defined as a fatigue lasting for one month or longer. The cause for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) has not yet been identified, nor are there tests that allow for its diagnosis; it needs to be identified through a process of elimination of other possible conditions. In spite of this, this syndrome is a genuine clinical condition, whose cause and treatment are, at present, now part of an intense research.

Studies conducted by independent investigators using restrictive criteria have set forth estimates which establish that at least 200,000 to 500,000 adults in the United States suffer from this or a condition related to it. In addition, data from the National Center for Diseases Control (CDC) tend to confirm those estimates. In spite of these estimates, no studies of this

condition have been conducted in children and adolescents, thus cases among them remain undiagnosed or receive a wrong diagnosis of the condition. Based on this data, the month of March of each year is commemorated in the United States as the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Awareness Month.

For these reasons, the Legislature deems it necessary to create awareness on the existence of this condition in Puerto Rico and to promote the importance of treating this disease, as an essential part of the health care of the Puerto Rican citizenry.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:**

Section 1.- The month of March is hereby declared as the “Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Awareness Month.”

Section 2.- The Secretary of State of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico shall issue a proclamation to exhort the People of Puerto Rico to create awareness about this disease on the first day of March of each year.

Section 3.- The Department of Health shall be responsible for the promotion and orientation on this condition, its diagnosis, treatment and new findings. In addition, it shall enter into agreements with bodies, public or private entities, and the municipalities of Puerto Rico for the adoption of the necessary measures to achieve the objectives of this Act through the organization and holding of activities to create awareness on the scope of this syndrome, its treatment, and existing services for its management. In addition, the importance of treating this disease shall be made publicly known as an essential part of the health care of the Puerto Rican citizenry. The participation of the citizenry and private entities in these activities shall also be promoted.

Section 4.- A copy of the Annual Proclamation shall be distributed to the media for its disclosure.

Section 5.- This Act shall take effect immediately after its approval.

## CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 52 (H.B. 1216) of the 1<sup>st</sup> Session of the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislature of Puerto Rico:

**AN ACT** to declare and establish the month of March of each year as the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Awareness Month”,

has been translated from Spanish to English and that the English version is correct.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 28<sup>th</sup> of August of 2006.

Francisco J. Domenech  
Director