

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing Governor David A. Paterson to proclaim March 6, 2010, as Lymphedema Awareness Day in the State of New York

WHEREAS, The State of New York takes great pride in recognizing days of awareness of important medical conditions, in the hopes of increasing education, treatment and cure; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to memorialize Governor David A. Paterson to proclaim March 6, 2010, as Lymphedema Awareness Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with National Lymphedema Awareness Day; and

WHEREAS, Lymphedema is a condition that occurs when the body's natural Lymphatic drainage system malfunctions and the lymphatic fluid within a given area, such as the leg, exceeds the amount that can be removed by this Lymphatic system; this results in extreme swelling and nauseating pain for the affected patient; and

WHEREAS, The total number of Lymphedema patients is difficult to establish because Lymphedema is under-reported and often misdiagnosed; and

WHEREAS, Under-diagnosing and under-treating of Lymphedema patients costs healthcare providers and healthcare insurers, including Medicare, untold millions of dollars every year because if left untreated, the potential for infection is greatly increased and may come on in the course of a few hours and requires immediate treatment on an emergency basis; and

WHEREAS, The United States Department of Health and Human Services estimates that Lymphedema affects some 100 million people worldwide and over three million people here in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Lymphedema can develop after cancer treatment, radiation therapy, major surgery, severe burns or other traumatic injuries; and

WHEREAS, The Center for Disease Control estimates that 20%-40% of all cancer survivors will develop Lymphedema at some point in their lifetime, with an even higher percentage among the elderly; and

WHEREAS, The National Cancer Institute estimates that 61% of cancer survivors in 2005 alone were over 65 years of age, further, as many as 1.25 million Medicare beneficiaries who are cancer survivors required treatment for their Lymphedema in 2005; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of the financial, physical, and psychological impact that Lymphedema has on those afflicted, it is incumbent upon the citizens of the State of New York to support the courageous individuals living and coping with this debilitating condition; and

WHEREAS, Grateful to the tireless advocates and healthcare providers who spend so much of their time and resources battling this painful and destructive condition that affects so many, this Legislative Body, this year calls particular attention to one such tireless advocate Joel Armel, an inspirational Lymphedema patient who has contributed to the Lymphedema community and has shown great courage in his struggle with this horrific disease; and

WHEREAS, As a determined activist for Lymphedema-related issues, Joel Armel's journey began when he was diagnosed 18 years ago with Lymphedema and was frustrated by the lack of medical resources and treatment options for this condition; and

WHEREAS, Joel Armel has worked diligently to seek funding for the Lymphedema Research Foundation's National Lymphatic Disease and Lymphedema Registry and Tissue Bank and to promote awareness for this disease; and

WHEREAS, Joel Armel has successfully worked with policy-makers and the healthcare providers to change health access laws so that both the

government and the insurance companies must provide for those who suffer from Lymphedema; and

WHEREAS, The observance of Lymphedema Awareness Day provides the opportunity to educate people and bring the much needed attention to this terribly painful condition, with the hopes of igniting increased research and funding for this worthy cause; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor David A. Paterson to proclaim March 6, 2010, as Lymphedema Awareness Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with National Lymphedema Awareness Day; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause further to pay just tribute to Joel Armel for his ceaseless dedicated efforts to promote both funding and awareness of Lymphedema; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Honorable David A. Paterson, Governor of the State of New York, the National Lymphedema Network, the New York State Lymphatic Research Foundation, and Mr. Joel Armel.