

**SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 190**

**WHEREAS**, The observance of Mental Illness Awareness Day on February 19, 2015, brings much-needed attention to a serious and often misunderstood issue that affects the lives of millions of Texans; and

**WHEREAS**, An estimated one in four American adults suffers from a mental disorder in a given year, and one-fifth of young people ages 13 to 18 experience a mental health condition that causes severe functional impairment; the most common form of mental illness is anxiety disorders, which are believed to affect 18 percent of the adult population; and

**WHEREAS**, Major depression, which affects 6.7 percent of adults, is a leading cause of disability worldwide and is associated with a significant risk of suicide; in the 15-to-24-year-old age group, suicide accounts for 20 percent of all deaths annually, and over 90 percent of those who die by suicide had one or more mental disorders; and

**WHEREAS**, The impact of mental illness on military veterans is a growing cause for concern; among service members who have been deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, one in five has been formally diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, and experts believe that many more could be affected because of inadequacies in screening and diagnosis; a particularly worrying trend is the high suicide rate of veterans relative to the general population, with an estimated 22 committing suicide every day; and

**WHEREAS**, For some, the stigma associated with mental illness can result in discrimination and bullying and take a damaging toll on relationships with loved ones; although mentally ill individuals are far more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators, there is a widespread perception that persons living with mental health conditions pose a threat to others; and

**WHEREAS**, In spite of its prevalence and debilitating effects, mental illness often goes undiagnosed and untreated; roughly half of all people experiencing homelessness have severe mental health or substance abuse issues, and far more Texans with serious mental illness are in jails and prisons than in hospitals; and

**WHEREAS**, Today, because of new discoveries in genetics, modern brain research, and psychiatry, mental illness is no longer the frightening mystery that it once was; advances in medical science have revealed that serious mental disorders have a biological basis similar to physical ailments like heart disease and diabetes; moreover, like the heart, the human brain is a vital organ whose illnesses can be successfully treated; and

**WHEREAS**, Sophisticated medicines can greatly ease the suffering of patients with mental illness and help many return to normal, productive, and rewarding lives; according to a 2009 report, increased mental health expenditures could also be a strong economic stimulus, with a potential return of \$23 for every \$1 spent on mental health services in Texas; and

**WHEREAS**, Agencies and organizations across the state and nation are committed to improving the quality of life of persons with mental illness by promoting treatment and prevention, eliminating stigma, increasing housing opportunities, and advancing smart investment in mental health services; Mental Illness Awareness Day provides an opportunity to acknowledge the commendable efforts of these groups to ensure that effective mental health care is available for every Texan in need; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 84th Legislature, hereby recognize February 19, 2015, as Mental Illness Awareness Day at the State Capitol and encourage all Texans to learn more about this important health matter.

Campbell

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on February 18, 2015.

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Secretary of the Senate

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Member, Texas Senate