SJR69

191533-1

By Senator Ward

RFD: Rules

First Read: 15-FEB-18

191533-1:n:02/13/2018:DSM*/cr LSA2018-810

RECOGNIZING OCTOBER 9, 2018, AS PANDAS AWARENESS DAY IN ALABAMA.

WHEREAS, pediatric acute-onset neuropsychiatric syndrome (PANS) and pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorder associated with streptococal infection (PANDAS) create the sudden onset of obsessive-compulsive disorder in children, causing previously health and emotionally adjusted children to experience severe anxiety and emotional disturbances; and

WHEREAS, children with PANS and PANDAS tend to manifest some of the following symptoms: tics or other abnormal movements, severe separation anxiety, generalized anxiety, irritability, aggression, personalty changes, attention deficit hyperactive disorder, marked deterioration in learning and school performance, and developmental regression, including regression in handwriting; and

WHEREAS, children with PANS and PANDAS may experience a moderate to dramatic improvement with

antibiotics, intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG) treatment, or plasmapheresis; and

WHEREAS, researchers at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) are currently engaged in extensive research and testing on how to effectively treat PANS and PANDAS; and

WHEREAS, researchers at Moleculera Labs at the University of Oklahoma have developed PANS and PANDAS blood testing procedures; and

WHEREAS, the University of Arizona and Banner Health System in Arizona have opened the first Centers for Post-Infectious Autoimmune Encephalopathy, providing insurance-based access to expert care and consultative services for general and subspecialist pediatricians around the country; and

WHEREAS, the medical and bioscience resources in Alabama make our state well situated to meaningfully contribute to best medical practices, research, and medical technology to advance the early diagnosis and treatment of children with PANS and PANDAS; and

WHEREAS, the NIMH estimates one in 200 children have PANS or PANDAS, meaning these diseases affect roughly 15,000 children in Alabama; and

WHEREAS, many general pediatricians, nurse practitioners, and pediatric subspecialists are not familiar with the most current diagnostic criteria and treatment guidelines for these disorders; and

WHEREAS, in addition to lack of access to treatment providers, many insurers do not cover treatment for PANS and PANDAS, which can cost many tens of thousands of dollars, placing it out of reach for most families; and

WHEREAS, the Southeastern PANS/PANDAS Association (SEPPA) is a Georgia-based nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding access to expert, insurance-based care for children and families suffering from PANS and PANDAS in this region; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that there be greater public awareness of this serious health issue among parents, policy makers, and medical providers in Alabama; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That we recognize October 9, 2018, as PANDA Awareness Day in Alabama.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the public and the press.