National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society
Illinois Public
Policy Network

Multiple Sclerosis License Plate for Illinois

Request

The Greater Illinois Chapter and Gateway Area Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society seek your support of HB6003 sponsored by Representative Carol Sente and SB3167 sponsored by Senator Linda Holmes to **amend Section 5 of the Illinois Vehicle Code by Adding Section 3-689 to establish a Multiple Sclerosis Assistance License Plate**.

Background

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic, often disabling disease that attacks the central nervous system (CNS). It is the number one disabling disease of young adults in America and more than 20,000 Illinois residents are affected by MS. While its progress, severity, and specific symptoms are unpredictable and vary from one person to another, new treatments and advances in research are giving new hope to people affected by the disease.

The revenue generated from the Multiple Sclerosis Assistance Fund will support the Financial Assistance Program for people with MS in Illinois, provided by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Greater Illinois Chapter. These programs assist in securing mobility equipment, transportation services, home and automobile modifications, counseling, respite care and more.

The State of Illinois currently offers a Specialty License Plates program, with specialty plates already established to increase awareness and support for a variety of purposes and causes. One specialty plate is disease specific and established for ovarian cancer, while two others increase awareness for life saving measures, including for mammograms and organ donations.

Summary

Please cosponsor HB6003 and SB3167 to establish a Multiple Sclerosis Assistance License Plate which will heighten awareness about MS and direct funds to the Financial Assistance Program for people living with MS in Illinois.

Supportive Information

- While the progress, severity, and specific symptoms of it are unpredictable and vary from one person to another, more than half of people with MS will need long-term care, either in an institution or non-institutional setting over a prolonged period of time. Long-term care refers to: health care; home care; adult care; respite care; assisted living and nursing home care. [1]
- While more than 90% of people with MS have worked at sometime in their lives, and more than 60% are working at the time of diagnosis, only 40-50% remains in the workforce 10-15 years down the road.[2]
- More than 20,000 Illinois residents are affected by MS. Current statistics indicate that the economic toll per individual affected by MS is approximately $69,000 per year – due to lost wages, medical and other expenses.[3]
- To fund this program, the Society proposes an additional $40 applicant fee for the license plate, with money distributed in the following manner:
    - $25 to the Multiple Sclerosis Assistance Fund; and
    - $15 to the Secretary of State Special License Plate Fund, to defray administrative and implementation cost.
  - A renewal fee of $27 for the Multiple Sclerosis Assistance License Plate would be distributed in the following manner:
    - $25 deposited in the Multiple Sclerosis Assistance Fund,
    - $2 to the Secretary of State Special License Plate Fund
- Interest in the Multiple Sclerosis Assistance License Plate spans beyond those 20,000 living with MS, and includes their family members and friends.

SUMMARY

Please co-sponsor HB6003 or SB3167. This specialty license plate will help heighten the level of awareness about multiple sclerosis, while at the same time providing much needed assistance to Illinois citizens affected by the consequences of the disease.

---

[1] Minden, SL, et al., "The Sonya Slifka Longitudinal Multiple Sclerosis Study, method and sample characteristics." Multiple Sclerosis 2006; 12: 24-38.

[1] Minden, SL, et al., "The Sonya Slifka Longitudinal Multiple Sclerosis Study, method and sample characteristics." Multiple Sclerosis 2006; 12: 24-38.

[1] Whetten-Goldstein, Kathryn, et al., "A comprehensive assessment of the cost of multiple sclerosis in the United States." Multiple Sclerosis 1998; 4: 419-425. (The Costs of MS Adjusted for Inflation, 1994 to 2007)