

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 1878

A RESOLUTION recognizing the efforts of John and Sara Ratzenberger and the LUNGeivity Foundation for increasing awareness about lung cancer.

WHEREAS, John and Sara Ratzenberger are active members of their Topeka community. In 2010, Sara was diagnosed with stage IV non-small cell lung cancer, when she was only 31 years old. Sara has always lived a very healthy lifestyle as a runner and non-smoker. The cancer diagnosis was made after nearly six months of misdiagnosis and lack of diagnosis during a surgery to remove the lower lobe of her right lung. It became apparent to both John and Sara Ratzenberger that the stigma of lung cancer as strictly a "smoker's disease" prevented proper and timely screening for Sara; and

WHEREAS, John and Sara Ratzenberger have become heavily involved in advocacy for lung cancer patients, and they are fighting to address the stigma of lung cancer as a type of cancer that only afflicts people that smoke; and

WHEREAS, The LUNGeivity Foundation strives to have a meaningful impact on improving lung cancer survival rates, ensure a higher quality of life for lung cancer patients and provide a community for those impacted by lung cancer. The organization was founded in 2001 by seven lung cancer survivors, and tens of thousands of others affected by lung cancer have joined in the years since; and

WHEREAS, The LUNGeivity Foundation is the largest private funder of lung cancer research in the United States and granted \$2 million to outstanding researchers in 2011. The LUNGeivity Foundation works with top lung cancer experts to identify and fund promising and innovative research into the early detection and targeted treatment of lung cancer; and

WHEREAS, Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women in Kansas, the United States and the world, this year killing more Americans than breast, prostate, colon, liver and kidney cancers combined; and

WHEREAS, In the United States in 2011, an estimated 221,130 people were diagnosed with lung cancer and an estimated 156,940 people died from lung cancer, accounting for 28% of all cancer deaths; and

WHEREAS, While tobacco accounts for 87% of lung cancer deaths, there are 16,000 to 24,000 Americans that die of lung cancer every year even though they were non-smokers; and

WHEREAS, If lung cancer in "never smokers" (defined by researchers as people who have smoked fewer than 100 cigarettes in their lifetime) had its own category separate from lung cancer in smokers, it would rank among the top 10 fatal cancers in the United States. Approximately 55% of all new lung cancer diagnoses are among people who have never smoked or are former smokers; and

WHEREAS, Two-thirds of nonsmokers now battling lung cancer are women, despite the fact that women in the general population smoke less than men and would probably represent the majority of any group of nonsmokers, including those with cancer; and

WHEREAS, Lung cancer in people that have never smoked is an important public health issue, and further exploration of its incidence patterns, etiology, and biology is needed. Increased awareness and coordination among all stakeholders, including federal and state governments, providers, patient groups, medical researchers, community leaders and organizations, the public and businesses, is critical to promote the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of lung cancer; and

WHEREAS, With lung cancer persisting as the leading cause of cancer mortality in the United States, research into the epidemiology of lung cancer in never-smokers should be an important public health priority: Now, therefore,

*Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas:* That we recognize the efforts of John and Sara Ratzenberger and the LUNGeivity Foundation for increasing awareness about lung cancer as a disease that afflicts both smokers and nonsmokers alike, advocating on behalf of lung cancer patients and survivors and taking action to raise awareness about lung cancer nationwide; and

*Be it further resolved:* That the Secretary of the Senate shall send five enrolled copies of this resolution to Senator V. Schmidt.

Senate Resolution No. 1878 was sponsored by Senator Vicki Schmidt.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the SENATE, and was adopted by that body

---

---

*President of the Senate.*

---

*Secretary of the Senate.*