

2017 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 72

BY SENATOR MILLS

SENATE. Designates Thursday, May 18, 2017, as March of Dimes Day at the Louisiana State Capitol.

A RESOLUTION

To designate Thursday, May 18, 2017, as March of Dimes Day at the Louisiana State Capitol.

WHEREAS, the March of Dimes began as the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis in 1938, established by then President Franklin Roosevelt, a victim himself of the polio virus; and

WHEREAS, Franklin Delano Roosevelt contracted the polio virus in 1921 at the age of thirty-nine and never walked unassisted again in his life; and

WHEREAS, the Foundation was directed by a close associate of the president, but its work was accomplished largely by volunteers who organized local March of Dimes fundraisers nationwide; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Foundation was to offer support when polio epidemics occurred and to fund scientific research regarding the polio virus, intending to eventually develop a vaccine against the feared disease; and

WHEREAS, during World War II the United States Army received a polio virus research grant funded by the March of Dimes to investigate the disease as one of those affecting soldiers fighting in North Africa; and

WHEREAS, in 1946, as a result of extensive efforts by the March of Dimes,

1 President Franklin Roosevelt was memorialized on newly minted U.S. dimes, forever linking  
2 FDR and the March of Dimes; and

3 WHEREAS, in 1955 the extensive efforts of the March of Dimes to fund research  
4 regarding polio paid off, and a March of Dimes grantee, Jonas Salk, MD, created the "Salk  
5 vaccine" which was quickly licensed and approved for use to prevent the contraction of  
6 polio. Within months the new cases of polio dropped from tens of thousands to a mere  
7 handful annually in the United States and, eventually, throughout the world; and

8 WHEREAS, with its original purpose successfully accomplished and with a  
9 prodigious fundraising potential and an army of volunteers, the March of Dimes turned its  
10 attention to fighting birth defects, funding programs of education intended to promote  
11 healthy pregnancies, and preventing premature births in the U.S.; and

12 WHEREAS, premature birth is the number one killer of newborns in the first month  
13 of life, with over half a million babies born prematurely every year in this country, including  
14 nearly eight thousand in Louisiana in 2014, representing over twelve percent of all births in  
15 the state; and

16 WHEREAS, Louisiana received a failing grade in preterm births because one in six  
17 babies are born preterm, with Caddo Parish having the worst preterm birthrate in the nation  
18 with more than eighteen percent of the state's births born preterm in this one parish alone;  
19 and

20 WHEREAS, on May 18, 2017, March of Dimes volunteers will be visiting the  
21 legislature to raise awareness of the issue of preterm birth and to symbolize hope to  
22 Louisiana families dealing with preterm births or who are working to stay healthy and  
23 bringing their babies to full term; and

24 WHEREAS, from a beginning nearly eighty years ago, largely through the patronage  
25 of President Franklin Roosevelt, himself a victim of polio, to an organization that funded the  
26 grant to Jonas Salk, MD, the discoverer of a vaccine to prevent the disease which has been  
27 effectively eradicated worldwide, to crusades to save babies and bring fewer preterm babies  
28 into the world, the March of Dimes has maintained its legions of volunteers and it is to be  
29 congratulated for the success at fundraising for its twenty-first century issues of premature  
30 birth, healthy pregnancies, and neonatal abstinctions critical for mothers in order to carry

1 healthy babies to full term, the March of Dimes has served this state and nation well and are  
2 deserving of support, respect, and the thanks of a grateful state and nation.

3 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
4 does hereby designate Thursday, May 18, 2017, as March of Dimes Day at the Louisiana  
5 State Capitol.

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
7 Louisiana Chapter of the March of Dimes.

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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part  
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Mary Dozier O'Brien.

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	DIGEST	
SR 72 Original	2017 Regular Session	Mills
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