

In Support Of New York State Assembly Bill No. A07478 And New York State Senate Bill No. S4934 To Amend The State Finance Law, In Relation To The Monies Of The Spinal Cord Injury Research Trust Fund

Referred to: The Health and Personnel Committee (Chairman Aiello and Legislators Belfiglio, Ronk, Robert Parete and Provenzano)

Legislator Craig Lopez offers the following:

WHEREAS, the New York State Spinal Cord Injury Research Board, enacted through the passage of July 1998 landmark legislation, provides research grants to find cures and treatments for spinal cord injuries and more than 16,000 New York State residents suffer from such injury, and

WHEREAS, the source of funding being the result of motor vehicle violations was the intent by the pioneers of the initial legislation to highlight the fact that a great percentage of SCI's result from motor vehicle accidents, and that a portion of the funds that are collected as a result of these violations should go towards research to treat and cure those that fall victim to the infractions. According to the Christopher and Dana Reeve's Foundation 2011 statistics, the average annual cost of care for SCI can exceed \$150,000.00 after an average of \$800,000.00 during the first year of injury, and

WHEREAS, Spinal Cord Injury Research Program (SCIRP) is not a drain on the taxpayers of the state as the funds are collected through the method described above. Since the creation of the program, funds have gone to several research facilities that have developed medications and modalities that are already on the market today. One example is Ampyra developed by Acorda Therapeutics based out of Hawthorne New York. Though initially tested on both Spinal Cord Injury victims and individuals with Multiple Sclerosis to increase walking gait, it was found more effective for those with MS and went into production in January of 2010 after FDA approval. Acorda is estimated to currently have a net worth of over \$1 billion. Along with prospects for the development of treatments, SCIRP is a high-tech job creator and attracts researchers from around the state as well as the rest of the country to take advantage of grant opportunities, and

WHEREAS, as of 2010, the program's funds have been diminished from its stated maximum of \$8.5 million a year which it collects from a portion of moving motor vehicle traffic violation surcharges, and allowing this funding to discontinue, undermines the progress made from over \$60 million invested since the program's inception, and

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WHEREAS, NYS Assembly Bill No. A07478 and NYS Senate Bill No. S4934, call for 5.6 percent of all moving vehicle traffic violations surcharges to be deposited into the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program trust fund, and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Legislature supports spinal cord injury research and encourages any efforts that support such research, and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Legislature supports NYS Assembly Bill No. A07478 and NYS Senate Bill No. S4934: amending S99-f, State Finance Law, relates to the monies of the spinal cord injury research trust fund; provides that 5.6 percent of monies collected by the mandatory surcharge imposed pursuant to subdivision 1 of section 1809 of the vehicle and traffic law shall be deposited in the trust fund, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature urges Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature to enact NYS Assembly Bill No. A07478 and NYS Senate Bill No. S4934: amending S99-f, State Finance Law relating to the monies of the spinal cord injury research trust fund and provides that 5.6 percent of monies collected by the mandatory surcharge imposed pursuant to subdivision 1 of section 1809 of the vehicle and traffic law shall be deposited in the trust fund, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature shall forward copies of this resolution to Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Dean G. Skelos, Senate Minority Leader John L. Sampson, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assembly Majority Leader Ron Canestrari, Assembly Minority Leader Brian M. Kolb, New York State Senators John J. Bonacic and William J. Larkin, Jr., New York State Assemblymen Kevin A. Cahill, Clifford W. Crouch, Peter Lopez, and Frank K. Skartados and the New York State Association of Counties,

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and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 21 NOES: 0
(Absent: Legislators Fabiano and Provenzano)
AYES: NOES:

Passed Committee: Health and Personnel Committee on April 30, 2012

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
NONE

0515.1

STATE OF NEW YORK

ss:

COUNTY OF ULSTER

This is to certify that I, the undersigned Clerk of the Legislature of the County of Ulster have compared the foregoing resolution with the original resolution now on file in the office of said clerk, and which was adopted by said Legislature on the 15th day of May, 2012, and that the same is a true and correct transcript of said resolution and of the whole thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of the County of Ulster this 17th Day of May in the year Two Thousand and Twelve.

Karen L. Binder, Clerk
Ulster County Legislature