
C-446

FIRST SESSION, THIRTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT,
55-56 ELIZABETH II, 2006-2007
HOUSE OF COMMONS OF CANADA

BILL C-446

An Act Respecting National Dystonia Awareness Week

FIRST READING, MAY 17, 2007

Summary

This enactment designates the week commencing on the first Sunday in June as “National Dystonia Awareness Week.”

1ST SESSION, 39TH PARLIAMENT,
55-56 ELIZABETH II, 2006-2007

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An Act respecting National Dystonia Awareness Week

Preamble: **WHEREAS** dystonia is a disabling neurological movement disorder with no cure that affects approximately 50,000 men, women, and children across Canada, and establishing “National Dystonia Awareness Week” will promote awareness and the accurate diagnosis of dystonia, as well as encouraging advocacy and better treatment options for those who suffer from this condition;

WHEREAS dystonia involves a series of neurological movement disorders caused by a malfunction that affects certain regions of the brain responsible for involuntary movement, the reason for the malfunction being largely unknown;

WHEREAS the symptoms of dystonia include slow or irregular movement, contractions and spasms of the body, sleep disturbance and changes in coordination, voice, vision, movement patterns and body posture and position;

WHEREAS dystonia is generally not well recognized or understood and its symptoms may go unnoticed or be misdiagnosed by medical professionals;

WHEREAS it may take patients with dystonia many visits to medical professionals over several years before an accurate diagnosis is made;

WHEREAS a timely and proper diagnosis of dystonia can lead to more effective treatment;

WHEREAS a greater awareness of dystonia and a fuller understanding of its severity and long-term chronic nature would facilitate better coordination among potential sources of support including employers, private insurance companies and the Government of Canada, which could provide income support under the *Canada Pension Plan* and other federal legislation;

WHEREAS Canadian statistics on instances of dystonia and its impact upon individuals, families and the economy are woefully lacking;

WHEREAS the establishment of National Dystonia Awareness Week would assist non-profit organizations such as the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation Canada in their work with their support groups and with patient advocacy groups and professional medical associations and societies in fostering a greater awareness of dystonia, and would also encourage the creation of educational forums on dystonia and increase media interest in dystonia;

WHEREAS observing such a week would raise public awareness about dystonia and promote earlier diagnosis and availability of up-to-date treatments, thereby helping to provide a better quality of life for individuals affected by dystonia;

AND WHEREAS the Parliament of Canada wishes to increase public awareness of dystonia by designating the week commencing on the first Sunday in June as National Dystonia Awareness Week;”

NOW, THEREFORE, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and the House of Commons, enacts as follows:

SHORT TITLE

1. This Act may be cited as the *National Dystonia Awareness Week Act*.

NATIONAL DYSTONIA AWARENESS WEEK

2. Throughout Canada, in each and every year, the week commencing on the first Sunday in June shall be known as “National Dystonia Awareness Week.”