



April 21, 2009

Subject: Acceptance Speech - 2009 Parkinson Awareness Proclamation Ceremony
SC State House ~ Columbia, South Carolina

Thank you, Lieutenant Governor Bauer

Today is a very good day for the Parkinson community in South Carolina. I am very proud to accept this proclamation from you and the state of South Carolina for Parkinson Awareness on behalf of the South Carolina Parkinson community and the Columbia Parkinson's Support Group.

I would like to express my appreciation to several people who provided their assistance in getting this proclamation made

- the state Proclamations Office
- Jenny Barber, who co-sponsored this proclamation petition
- the "SC Access" staff of the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging for their continued assistance to arrange this public event

Today's focus on Parkinson's Awareness and Recognition in South Carolina is very important for at least three reasons.

- Parkinson's disease needs to be understood by the citizens of South Carolina. You can't catch Parkinson's, it is not contagious. It is a long term progressive disorder much like Alzheimer's.
- The impact of Parkinson's disease upon the patient, their family, their caregivers, and their community can be horrific; and needs to be understood by the citizens of our state. For example: Just within the immediate city of Columbia, it is estimated that there are 30 new cases of Parkinson's each year. The age of those being diagnosed is getting younger and younger, so Parkinson's is not an old folks disease any more.
- The economic impact of this disease to our state needs to be better understood by our government and the citizens of our state, especially now during times of financial problems.

Yes, today is a very good day for the Parkinson community in South Carolina; because we are here, in our State House, acknowledging that South Carolina proudly joins the growing number of states proclaiming April 2009 as "Parkinson's Awareness" month.

It is the hope of the South Carolina Parkinson's Community that with increased awareness of Parkinson's disease, that the citizens of South Carolina, and the state and local governments will come to **RECOGNIZE, BECOME INFORMED, SUPPORT, VOLUNTEER** to assist with their resources and time, and **BECOME ADVOCATES** for finding a cure for Parkinson's disease

Again, Lieutenant Governor Bauer we thank you for continued support of the Parkinson's community.

Dottie M. Gantt, President