



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**PROCLAMATION**  
BY THE GOVERNOR

**WHEREAS**, Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or ALS is better known as Lou Gehrig's disease; and

**WHEREAS**, ALS is a fatal neurodegenerative disease characterized by degeneration of cell bodies of the lower motor neurons in the gray matter of the anterior horns of the spinal cord; and

**WHEREAS**, The initial symptom of ALS is weakness of the skeletal muscles, especially those of the extremities; and

**WHEREAS**, As ALS progresses the patient experiences difficulty in swallowing, talking, and breathing; and

**WHEREAS**, ALS eventually causes muscles to atrophy and the patient becomes a functional quadriplegic; and

**WHEREAS**, ALS does not affect a patient's mental capacity, so that the patient remains alert and aware of his or her loss of motor functions and the inevitable outcome of continued deterioration and death; and

**WHEREAS**, on average, patients diagnosed with ALS only survive two to five years from the time of diagnosis; and

**WHEREAS**, ALS has no known cause, means of prevention, or cure; and

**WHEREAS**, research indicates that military veterans are approximately 50% more likely to develop ALS as those who have not served in the military; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2008 the Department of Veterans Affairs implemented regulations to establish a presumption of service connection for ALS thereby presuming that the development of ALS was incurred or aggravated by a veteran's service in the military; and

**WHEREAS**, a national ALS patient registry, administered by the Centers for Disease Control, is currently identifying cases of ALS in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month increases the public's awareness of ALS patients' circumstances and acknowledges the terrible impact this disease has not only on the patient but on his or her family and the community and recognizes the research being done to eradicate this horrible disease;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Bill Haslam, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim May 2014 as

*Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month*

in Tennessee and encourage all citizens to join me in this worthy observance.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the State of Tennessee to be affixed at Nashville on this fifth day of May, 2014.

*Bill Haslam*

Governor

*Joe Vargitt*

Secretary of State