Co-sponsors of National Polio Awareness Week

The following legislators co-sponsored HJ Res. 404 — National Polio Awareness Week for 1992.

CALIFORNIA  Frank Riggs, Bob Dornan , Barbara Boxer, Carlos Moorhead, Jerry Lewis, Julian Dixon, Glenn Anderson, William Thomas, David Dreier
FLORIDA  William Lehman, Charles Bennett
ILLINOIS  William Lipinski, Harris Fawell
INDIANA  Andy Jacobs
IOWA  Jim Leach, Fred Grandy
LOUISIANA  William Jefferson, Jimmy Hayes
MARYLAND  Thomas McMillen
MICHIGAN  William Ford, Bob Traxler, Dave Camp, William S. Broomfield
MISSOURI  Bill Emerson, Richard Gephardt
NEVADA  Barbara Vucanovich
NEW JERSEY  Robert Roe, Marge Roukema, Frank Guarini
NEW MEXICO  Joe Skeen
NEW YORK  Edolphus Towns, Michael McNulty, Charles B. Rangel, James Walsh, Sherwood Boehlert, Hamilton Fish
OHIO  James Traficant, Paul Gillmor
OREGON  Michael Kopetski
PENNSYLVANIA  John Murtha
TENNESSEE  Bob Clement, John Tanner, Harold Ford, Jim Cooper, James H. Quillen, Bart Gordon, Don Sundquist, John Duncan
TEXAS  Bill Sarapalius, Martin Frost, Ralph Hall, Charles Wilson
VIRGINIA  Jim Moran
WASHINGTON  John Miller, Rod Chandler
WEST VIRGINIA  Bob Wise
WISCONSIN  Jim Moody, Gerald Kleczka
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  Eleanor Holmes-Norton

The number fell short of the 218 sponsors needed. International Polio Network would like to thank the leaders and individuals in the above states for their cooperation. We would like to invite leaders/individuals from the states not listed to join us in our future efforts.

Thanks to John T. Doolittle, CA and his staff for introducing the resolution and for their cooperation in bringing post-polio issues to the attention of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Poliomyelitis and Scoliosis by Serena S. Hu, MD, will appear in the Fall 1992 (Vol. 8, No. 4) issue of Polio Network News.

THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

Ms. Joan Headley, Executive Director
International Polio Network
5100 Oakland Ave., #206
St. Louis, Missouri 63110

Dear Ms. Headley:
I am pleased to recognize this week of June 1 through June 7, 1992 as “National Polio Awareness Week” to increase our understanding of polio and its late effects.

As a physician, I am well aware that the effects of polio can be devastating. While new and effective vaccines have dramatically decreased the number of Americans with the disease, the polio epidemics of the past have exacted an enormous emotional and physical toll on thousands of our citizens, thus preventing them from living full, productive lives. Long after their recovery from the initial illness, some of the 650,000 polio survivors in the United States now suffer from new muscular weakness and atrophy, fatigue, respiratory problems, anxiety, and pain. Together, these symptoms are known as post-polio syndrome. While modest exercise, weight maintenance, and physical and drug therapy can all help patients, a cure for this complex and mysterious disorder remains elusive.

For more than 100 years, physicians have recognized that some patients experience later-life problems related to polio. Until recently, however, little was known about the phenomenon. As the number of polio survivors with new symptoms continues to increase, the biomedical research community has begun to develop a better understanding of post-polio syndrome. Leading America in the effort to unlock the secrets behind post-polio syndrome is the Federal Government’s National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). Thanks to research supported by the NINDS, scientists now find that the new muscle weakness in patients can be related to overuse of polio-damaged nerve cells in the spinal cord. Investigators are also learning more about what happens to cause other symptoms of post-polio syndrome, such as swallowing abnormalities, that might be life-threatening. Such findings may pave the way to new treatments for the disorder.

I congratulate the International Polio Network and other volunteer organizations who share the common goal of improving the health and well-being of people with post-polio syndrome. In addition to educating the public, your efforts to promote research on post-polio syndrome, along with those of the NINDS, are our Nation’s best hope for new methods of treatment within this, the Decade of the Brain. The Federal Government will continue to fight along with you to find better treatments, and ultimately a cure and method to prevent polio, thus erasing this disease once and for all.

You have my very best wishes for success in all your programs.

Sincerely,
Louis W. Sullivan, M.D.