2017 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 104

February 8, 2018 - Introduced by Senators VINEHOUT, RISSE, WIRCH and RINGHAND, cosponsored by Representatives BERCEAU, SHANKLAND, SINICKI, ZEPNICK, VRUWINK, HEBL, SPREITZER, SUBECK, SARGENT, KOLSTE and CROWLEY. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

Relating to: recognizing January 30, 2018, as “CTE Awareness Day” in Wisconsin.

Whereas, Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE) is a progressive, degenerative brain disease that appears in persons with a history of repetitive brain trauma sustained over a period of years; and

Whereas, CTE was first described in 1928 by Dr. Harrison Martland in a study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association that linked brain injury and boxing (Martland, Harrison S. (1928) “Punch Drunk.” JAMA 91(15): 1103–1107); and

Whereas, it was not until 2002 that Dr. Bennet Omalu discovered the first pathological evidence of CTE in a professional football player and, together with his colleagues at the University of Pittsburgh, published the details of his groundbreaking findings in 2005 (Omalu, B., DeKosky S., Minster, R., Kamboh, M., Hamilton, R., & Wecht, C. (2005) “Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy in a National Football League player.” Neurosurgery, 57(1), 128–134); and
Whereas, CTE is caused by a buildup of an abnormal protein called Tau in the brain, which leads to brain cell death; and

Whereas, the risk of developing CTE is greatest with athletes, who frequently endure repeated subconcussive blows to the head from playing contact sports, military veterans, who can suffer traumatic injury from military training or blasting, and domestic violence survivors who sustain hits by partners or caretakers, and it also appears in those with epilepsy; and

Whereas, while symptoms associated with CTE, such as sleep disturbances, memory loss, tremors, addictions, progressive dementia, depression, suicidal thoughts, impaired judgment, and paranoia, most often present years or decades after the brain trauma or hits cease, they have been found in a patient as young as 17 years old; and

Whereas, currently, CTE can be definitively diagnosed only after death through postmortem neuropathological analysis; and

Whereas, advocacy organizations, health care providers, and institutional researchers are dedicated to studying the cause and symptoms of CTE in order to enable parents and families to make informed decisions regarding the best interests of their children in youth sports and to develop an earlier diagnostic tool so that patients may address these symptoms as early as possible; and

Whereas, one such advocacy organization is Faces of CTE, co-founded by the Wisconsin family of Joseph Chernach, a youth and high school football athlete diagnosed with CTE; and

Whereas, the mission of Faces of CTE is to put a face on the mind-robbing disease Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy and educate the public that CTE does not only impact professional athletes, but children and non-athletes as well; and
Whereas, Faces of CTE founded CTE Awareness Day on January 30, 2017, and now, along with other organizations, celebrates CTE Awareness Day across the United States in order to reflect on those lost to CTE, how to help those suffering with the disease, and, most importantly, how to stop the disease; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That the Wisconsin State Legislature recognizes January 30, 2018, as “CTE Awareness Day” in Wisconsin.

(END)