



PRESS RELEASE

Arizona State Senate

1700 W Washington Street, Phoenix, AZ 85007

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Senator Katie Hobbs sponsors resolution declaring National Eating Disorders Awareness Week

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – Senator Katie Hobbs has introduced Senate Resolution 1010 to declare the week of February 23, 2014 as National Eating Disorders Awareness Week to bring attention to the seriousness of eating disorders and the impact of these illnesses on Arizona.

In the U.S., 20 million women and 10 million men suffer from a clinically significant eating disorder at some time in their life, including anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder, or an eating disorder not otherwise specified. If left untreated, eating disorders can damage the brain, liver, kidneys, heart, GI tract, bones, teeth, skin and hair. They can result in serious medical conditions, such as osteoporosis, retarded growth, kidney problems, ulcers and heart failure.

"Whether or not they are aware, most Arizonans know someone who has been affected by an eating disorder. The effects can be devastating to your health and even deadly, but treatment does work," said Sen. Hobbs. "Through public awareness campaigns like the National Eating Disorders Awareness Week we hope more Arizonans will notice the symptoms and seek help for friends and loved ones who suffer from these dangerous disorders."

Lynn Grefe, president and CEO of the National Eating Disorders Association, stated, "We thank Senator Hobbs for her leadership in bringing attention to these issues. Eating disorders are serious illnesses that have the highest death rate of any mental illness, but they are treatable. That's why it's so important that we talk about it and address the challenges to prevention and treatment."

Stated Angela Bernhardt, NEDA's Arizona Star Advocate, who spent three years working at an Arizona inpatient eating disorder treatment center, "Eating disorders do not target any one population based on gender, race, sexual orientation or social economic status, yet there is still a lack of understanding among the general public about the challenging impacts of these illnesses. That is why it is so important to work together to raise awareness and educate the public about eating disorders, in order to save lives. Among various mental illnesses, eating disorders have the highest fatality rates."

—*About National Eating Disorders Awareness Week*—

During the annual NEDA awareness Week, thousands of people come together in communities across the country, hosting events to raise awareness about body image and bring national attention to the severity of eating disorders, which are bio-psycho-social illnesses with often devastating – sometimes life-threatening – consequences. Research and NEDA program outcomes demonstrate that education and outreach leads to increases in knowledge of resources and help-seeking behavior for those in need of support for an eating disorder. For Treatment Referrals, Visit www.MyNEDA.org or Contact NEDA's Live Helpline: 800-931-2237.

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