



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

Senator Flanagan Sponsors Resolution Making September Hydrocephalus Awareness Month

JOHN J. FLANAGAN September 18, 2012

| ISSUE: **HEALTH**



Senator John Flanagan (2nd Senate District) recently joined with Mia Padron of the Hydrocephalus Association to proclaim September Hydrocephalus Awareness Month and to present the organization with a resolution he sponsored to help raise awareness of the incurable condition.

The pair also used the meeting to inform residents of the 7th annual Hydrocephalus WALK that will take place on Saturday, September 29th at 10:00 a.m. in Belmont Lake State Park in West Babylon. The family fun day and walk will include refreshments, Chinese Auction, bake sale, arts and crafts, DJ, Tae kwon do demo show, balloon animals and other fun events. WBAB and the New York Islanders will also take part in the day's events.

According to the Hydrocephalus Association web site, hydrocephalus is an abnormal accumulation of fluid inside the brain that may occur at any age and is a lifelong condition that affects over one million Americans from newborns to adults. While experts estimate that the condition affects one in every 500 children, the causes are unknown.

The symptoms of hydrocephalus vary with age, condition progression, and individual differences in tolerance to the condition. In an infant, the most obvious indication of hydrocephalus is often a rapid increase in head circumference or an unusually large head size. Other symptoms may include vomiting, sleepiness, irritability, downward deviation of the eyes and seizures; and older children and adults may experience headache followed by vomiting, nausea, papilledema (swelling of the optic disc), blurred or double vision, sunseting of the eyes, problems with balance, poor coordination, gait disturbance, urinary incontinence, slowing or loss of developmental progress, lethargy, drowsiness, irritability, or other changes in personality or cognition including memory loss.

Most often, hydrocephalus is treated by surgically inserting a shunt system which diverts the flow of cerebrospinal fluid to another area of the body where it can be absorbed as part of the normal circulatory process. About 40,000 shunt operations are performed each year in this country as standard treatment for this condition but due to the lack of advancement in treatment methods, many people with hydrocephalus are unable to lead full and productive lives.

All of the proceeds from the September 29th walk will benefit the programs of the Hydrocephalus Association, a national non-profit organization that provides support, education and advocacy to individuals, families and medical professionals dealing with the complex issues of hydrocephalus, as well as research to find a cure.

“This is a condition that is relatively unknown but hopefully by raising awareness, we can help some parents and others who may be afflicted with this condition. I thank Ms. Padron and the organization for their efforts and am glad to play a small role in their efforts,” stated Senator Flanagan.

Those who wish to participate in the walk can register on the day of the event beginning at 8:30 am. For more information or to register prior to the day of the event, residents can visit <http://walk4hydro.kintera.org/liny> or can call either Ms. Padron at 631-588-8846, Jackie Davidson at 631-462-2092 or email them at teamhydrocephalusliny@yahoo.com.

Anyone who would like to get more information about hydrocephalus should visit the Hydrocephalus Association's web site at www.hydroassoc.org.