



SENATOR STEPHANIE KUNZE
OCTOBER 23, 2019
SPONSOR TESTIMONY SENATE BILL 163
"ALS AWARENESS" LICENSE PLATE

Chairman McColley, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present Senate Bill 163, which is companion legislation to House Bill 227, to create the "ALS Awareness" license plate.

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or ALS, is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord. Motor neurons reach from the brain to the spinal cord and from the spinal cord to the muscles throughout the body. The progressive degeneration of the motor neurons in ALS eventually leads to their demise. When the motor neurons die, the ability of the brain to initiate and control muscle movement is lost. With voluntary muscle action progressively affected, people may lose the ability to speak, eat, move and breathe. The motor nerves that are affected when you have ALS are the motor neurons that provide voluntary movements and muscle control.

Based on U.S. population studies, a little over 6,000 people in the U.S. are diagnosed with ALS each year. (That's 15 new cases a day.) ALS usually strikes people between the ages of 40 and 70, and at least 16,000 Americans can have the disease at any given time. For unknown reasons, military veterans are approximately twice as likely to be diagnosed with the disease as the general public.

This legislation, if enacted into law, seeks to establish an ALS Awareness license plate, which must display an appropriate logo and words selected by the representatives of the ALS Association Central & Southern Ohio Chapter and the ALS Association Northern Ohio Chapter, and approved by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles. There would be a \$25 required contribution in addition to a \$10 administrative BMV fee. Contributions regenerated from the sale of these specialty license plates must be paid to the ALS Association Central & Southern Ohio Chapter to be split between that Chapter and the ALS Association Northern Ohio Chapter, as agreed upon between the two Chapters. The contributions must be used to discover treatments and a cure for ALS, and to serve, advocate for, and empower people affected by ALS to live their lives to the fullest.

Currently there are four other states that have ALS license plates. Those states are Colorado, Maryland, Massachusetts, and North Carolina.

Chairman McColley and members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present Senate Bill 163. I am happy to answer any questions that you might have.