

## ATAXIA AWARENESS DAY

WHEREAS: Ataxia, lack of muscular coordination, is due to a number of related neurological disorders, causing slow, progressive deterioration of nerve cells in the spinal cord and cerebellum, the coordination center of the brain; and

WHEREAS: When hereditary, ataxia is due to a gene passed from generation to generation, either as a dominant or recessive trait. Symptoms can occur at any age, but most often in ages 20-40 when dominant and during the teen years when recessive; and

WHEREAS: Symptoms include a stumbling walk, hand incoordination and slurred speech. Symptoms progress over a period of 10-20 years, and patients may be confined to a wheelchair; and

WHEREAS: An estimated 150,000 individuals are affected by hereditary ataxia and sporadic ataxia in the United States. Ataxia can strike anyone at any time, without regard to age, gender, race or creed. Since there is no known cure, the only defense is research and prevention through education; now

THEREFORE: I, SONNY PERDUE, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim September 25, 2003, as ATAXIA AWARENESS DAY in Georgia.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this 29th day of August in the year of our Lord two thousand three.