

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF  
NEUROLOGICAL SURGEONS

KATHLEEN T. CRAIG, *Executive Director*  
5550 Meadowbrook Drive  
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008  
Phone: 888-566-AANS  
Fax: 847-378-0600  
info@aans.org



American  
Association of  
Neurological  
Surgeons



Congress of  
Neurological  
Surgeons

CONGRESS OF  
NEUROLOGICAL SURGEONS

REGINA SHUPAK, *CEO*  
10 North Martingale Road, Suite 190  
Schaumburg, IL 60173  
Phone: 877-517-1CNS  
FAX: 847-240-0804  
info@cns.org

*President*  
CHRISTOPHER I. SHAFFREY, MD  
Durham, North Carolina

*President*  
GANESH RAO, MD  
Houston, Texas

October 9, 2019

The Honorable Marco Rubio  
United States Senate  
284 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**SUBJECT: S. Res. 329, Designating September 2019, as "National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month"**

Dear Senator Rubio,

On behalf of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) and the Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS), we would like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude for introducing S. Res. 329, designating September 2019, as "National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month." There is a great need to increase public awareness and research investments to improve outcomes for individuals suffering from a spinal cord injury. Hopefully, your resolution will focus more attention and accelerate progress towards new treatments, therapies, and rehabilitation.

As you are aware, more than 291,000 people in the United States, 42,000 of which are veterans, live with spinal cord injuries, which cost society billions of dollars in health care costs and lost wages. With approximately 17,730 new spinal cord injuries each year, half of which are under the age of 30 — the future of our country — more attention and funding must be paid to support clinical trials for new therapies that offer promise and hope to individuals living with paralysis due to a spinal cord injury.

Years ago, our organizations founded the **ThinkFirst National Injury Prevention Foundation** ([www.thinkfirst.org/](http://www.thinkfirst.org/)), whose mission is to prevent brain, spinal cord and other traumatic injuries through education, research and advocacy, so we sincerely appreciate that your resolution commends the dedication of national, regional, and local organizations, researchers, doctors, volunteers and people across the country who are working to improve the quality of life of individuals living with these devastating injuries. We also agree with you that a collaborative approach to spinal cord injury research will ultimately provide the pathway to new treatment options.

Again, thank you for your leadership on this issue. We look forward to working with you on this and other important health policy issues.

Sincerely,

Christopher I. Shaffrey, President  
American Association of Neurological Surgeons

Ganesh Rao, MD, President  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons

**Contact:**

Adrienne Roberts Mortimer, Senior Manager, Legislative Affairs  
AANS/CNS Washington Office  
25 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 610  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
Email: AMortimer@neurosurgery.org  
Direct: 202-446-2029