



A letter from Donna Brown, ATA member, to Lisa Freeman, ATA Manager of Member Services

Hey Lisa,

It's late at night as I write this, yet the words are right here, right now, so here goes: Last Thursday, May 1, though snowy and bleak, was an AMAZING DAY! My husband, Gary, and I went to the Colorado state capitol to be part of history in the making, for both Colorado and tinnitus awareness!

Last year's climb on Washington state's Mount Rainier to raise money for the American Tinnitus Association's research program was an incredible experience. Our successful climb gave me an overwhelming sense of accomplishment. But returning home was anticlimactic. It seemed that I received more acknowledgment in Washington and Oregon than in Colorado. I was disappointed at the lack of reception in Colorado. It seemed to be just "business as usual" upon my return.

However, a short time later, a bright star among the dust and debris came in the form of Colorado general assemblywoman, Dianne Primavera. I had contacted her prior to and after my climb. She then e-mailed me, saying that she wanted to meet. We got together at a local coffee shop to discuss tinnitus and hit it off right away!

Although Representative Primavera does not have tinnitus, she has suffered with her own health problems [she is a breast cancer survivor] and was very receptive to my tinnitus concerns. She was quite enthusiastic about my efforts and successes on behalf of ATA and tinnitus research. Putting her feelings into action, she proposed a House resolution to declare May 21 "Tinnitus Awareness Day" in the state of Colorado. On May 1, 2008, the resolution **passed**. Gary and I were invited

to the House chambers for the resolution vote and saw the whole proceeding! We sat in amazement and with pride as the House Speaker read the resolution.

During the discussion phase, we were astonished when a few other state assembly members stood up on the House floor and shared their stories and struggles with tinnitus. I felt an immediate connection with them. With tears in my eyes, I rushed up to one of the representatives to introduce myself and thank her for her testimony. We shared a meaningful moment, speaking briefly and quietly on the sidelines.

The proceedings took about 15 minutes from start to finish. When the House took a vote, the results were 60 to one in favor! Then I saw Representative Primavera approaching me with the biggest grin on *her* face! We hugged and I thanked her for all her help in getting this important date on the calendar. Gary filmed the whole session and I'm glad he did. My hands were shaking so much I could not have done it.

As we left the capitol building and went out into the steadily falling snow, I felt the atmosphere change from bleak to very BRIGHT.

It is hard to fully capture the "moment," but I did the best I could. Thanks again, Lisa, for all your support, ideas for May 21 and for being YOU. FYI, I decided to do a Walk For Awareness on May 21 and have written a few Colorado Support-Group leaders to ask them to do the same. The walk begins at 6:00 P.M. from my studio, Healthful Journey Yoga, located at 80 Garden Center, Ste. 3, in Broomfield, Colo.

Warmest regards,  
Donna and Gary

Read the [full text](#) of the House resolution passed by the Colorado General Assembly on May 1, 2008, and possibly use it as a model for approaching your own state and local lawmakers to declare a "Tinnitus Awareness Day" in your own communities.

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