



## P R O C L A M A T I O N

### Tinnitus Awareness Week (city, county or state)

WHEREAS, Tinnitus, often defined as "ringing in the ears," causes a person to hear ringing, buzzing or a variety of other sounds, without an external cause, and the person may also have a heightened sensitivity to sound; and

WHEREAS, Tinnitus can be a debilitating condition, reducing quality of life for those chronically affected; and

WHEREAS, Tinnitus is most often the result of extreme noise exposure from either a single impulse noise or the accumulation of noisy events, but may also be caused by conditions such as an ear infection; the use of certain drugs; a blocked auditory tube or canal; or a head injury; and

WHEREAS, According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the maximum allowable level of noise exposure is 85 dBA (decibels) for eight hours and even at that level, seven to eight people will still sustain hearing damage; and

WHEREAS, Even though there are recommended maximum allowable exposure times, cumulative noise exposure, even at "safe" levels, can cause tinnitus over the years; and

WHEREAS, We are living in the age of amplified sound where many everyday noise sources produce decibel levels that can be hazardous and result in tinnitus and other types of hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, Some everyday noises that exceed the allowable noise exposure level of 85 dBA include a blow dryer, subway train, power lawn mower, chainsaw, yelling child, rock concert, symphony, thunderclap, jackhammer, jet engine plane 100 feet away and an MP3-type player; and

WHEREAS, Approximately 50 million Americans experience tinnitus to some degree and 10 to 12 million have chronic tinnitus and seek medical attention for their condition; and

WHEREAS, One to two million Americans are debilitated by their tinnitus; and

WHEREAS, In 2006, over 390,000 American veterans were diagnosed with service-connected tinnitus; and

WHEREAS, The Army is the only branch of the military that requires earplugs as part of the uniform yet many types of military equipment exceed the 85 dBA limit, including an Apache helicopter, a 9 mm pistol and a grenade; and

WHEREAS, In 2006, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs spent \$539 million on tinnitus disability compensation for veterans; and

WHEREAS, Tinnitus is currently the number one service-connected disability of military personnel returning from the current conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

WHEREAS, Between all public and private funding in the United States, only \$4 million is devoted to tinnitus research, far less than what is spent on research for most other medical conditions; and

WHEREAS, New, sophisticated brain-imaging technologies have allowed scientists to identify the areas of the brain that involve tinnitus and have led scientists to study tinnitus on several new fronts; and

WHEREAS, Current therapies cannot permanently rid a patient of tinnitus and not all tinnitus patients benefit from existing therapies; now, therefore,

*Be It Resolved by the (city of, county of, state of, mayor of, governor of)*

1. That we designate May 18-24, 2008, as Tinnitus Awareness Week;
2. That we recognize the importance of continuing research to find a cure for tinnitus;
3. That, because tinnitus is a condition that can affect anyone, young or old, it is especially important that we increase the public's awareness of tinnitus and its debilitating effects; and
4. That we encourage both private and public organizations to provide funding to scientists working on ways to alleviate the symptoms of tinnitus.

*Be It Further Resolved,* That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the American Tinnitus Association and to the National Institutes of Health and 10 copies to the members of (*insert state*) Congressional delegation.

## **National Tinnitus Awareness Week May 18-24, 2008**

