



**CHARLIE CRIST**  
GOVERNOR

***NEUROMYELITIS OPTICA AWARENESS MONTH***

WHEREAS, Neuromyelitis Optica (NMO) is a chronic, lifetime, disabling neurological disease of unknown origin that affects the central nervous system; and

WHEREAS, NMO is under-recognized (and its exact prevalence is unknown) and is often confused with Multiple Sclerosis (MS), leading to delay in care and inadequate therapy; and

WHEREAS, the treatment of NMO is often beyond the scope of currently FDA approved medications, thus creating a barrier to effective treatment; and

WHEREAS, under-treatment for NMO can lead to hospitalizations, inability to walk, difficulty breathing without assistance and blindness; and

WHEREAS, the Multiple Sclerosis Patient Network is dedicated to advancing research focusing on the cause and treatment of NMO, while also raising health care provider, patient, and public awareness of this often devastating disease; and

WHEREAS, it is important to promote awareness, foster a greater understanding of NMO, and encourage NMO research, patient care, and education through patient-led care;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Charlie Crist, Governor of the State of Florida, do hereby extend greetings and best wishes to all observing March 2009 as *Neuromyelitis Optica Awareness Month*.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed at Tallahassee, the Capitol, this 9<sup>th</sup> day of March, in the year two thousand nine.

Handwritten signature of Charlie Crist in black ink.

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Governor