
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 484 Session of
2024

INTRODUCED BY SANCHEZ, HOHENSTEIN, McNEILL, HILL-EVANS, KINSEY,
MERSKI, GIRAL AND VENKAT, JUNE 21, 2024

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, JUNE 21, 2024

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of June 2024 as "Myasthenia Gravis
2 Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Myasthenia gravis (MG) is a chronic autoimmune
4 neuromuscular disease characterized by varying degrees of
5 weakness of the skeletal muscles of the body; and

6 WHEREAS, MG first appeared in medical reports in 1672, but
7 did not earn its name, myasthenia gravis, which literally means
8 grave muscular weakness, until its adoption by the Berlin
9 Society of Psychiatry and Neurology in November 1899; and

10 WHEREAS, MG is caused by a defect in the transmission of
11 nerve impulses to muscles, whereby antibodies effectively block,
12 alter or destroy the nerve cell receptors that generate muscle
13 contraction; and

14 WHEREAS, MG is classified as an autoimmune disease due to the
15 fact that in cases involving MG the immune system, which
16 normally protects the body from foreign organisms, mistakenly
17 sets upon a course to attack itself; and

18 WHEREAS, The prevalence rate of MG in the United States is an

1 estimated 14 to 20 out of every 100,000 people; and

2 WHEREAS, MG is indiscriminate in its affliction, as MG can
3 occur in all ethnic groups and genders, but primarily occurs in
4 young adult women under 40 years of age and men over 60 years of
5 age; and

6 WHEREAS, It is important to note that MG is not hereditary,
7 nor is it contagious, and, in most cases, MG's symptoms manifest
8 in the form of weakness of the eye muscles, difficulty in
9 swallowing, slurred or impaired speech, shortness of breath and
10 weakness in the arms, hands, fingers, legs or neck; and

11 WHEREAS, Since weakness is a common symptom of many
12 disorders, the diagnosis of MG is often overlooked or
13 unnecessarily deferred; and

14 WHEREAS, Approximately 15% to 20% of individuals with MG
15 experience at least one myasthenic crisis in their lifetime, in
16 which the muscles that control breathing weaken to the point
17 where a ventilator is required to breathe; and

18 WHEREAS, MG can generally be treated and controlled with the
19 use of medications, therapies or surgical procedures that
20 include anticholinesterase agents, immunosuppressive drugs,
21 plasmapheresis, intravenous immunoglobulins or a thymectomy,
22 which is the removal of the thymus gland; and

23 WHEREAS, The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and
24 Stroke, a component of the National Institutes of Health,
25 maintains the primary responsibility of conducting and
26 supporting research on brain and nervous system disorders,
27 including MG; and

28 WHEREAS, Organizations such as the Myasthenia Gravis
29 Foundation of America (MGFA), the Muscular Dystrophy Association
30 and the Myasthenia Gravis Association of Western Pennsylvania

1 (MGAWP) at Allegheny General Hospital are leading the effort to
2 foster a greater degree of education and outreach relating to
3 MG; and

4 WHEREAS, The MGFA's research committee has been instrumental
5 in supporting research that aims to improve the lives of
6 patients with MG by creating a comprehensive MG Patient Registry
7 and designating several broad research priorities, which include
8 biomarkers, mechanisms of disease, therapeutic strategies and
9 improving patient outcomes; and

10 WHEREAS, The MGAWP's treatment and advocacy center has played
11 an integral role in providing first-rate medical care and social
12 and emotional support to Pennsylvanians living with MG; and

13 WHEREAS, The observance of "Myasthenia Gravis Awareness
14 Month" provides additional outreach and education concerning MG
15 by informing the general public about MG's seriousness and
16 raising funds to help affected individuals; and

17 WHEREAS, Organizations like MGFA and MGAWP utilize the
18 observance of "Myasthenia Gravis Awareness Month" to encourage
19 the general public and those living with MG to make effective
20 use of their social media platforms to spread greater awareness
21 about MG, engage close friends, relatives and others to attend
22 an MG screening, contribute financially to organizations
23 supporting the fight against MG and create awareness about MG in
24 their workplaces, organizations, schools and social circles; and

25 WHEREAS, The purpose of this resolution is to further the
26 laudable and worthwhile mission of MG advocates across the
27 nation to advance knowledge and awareness of a disorder
28 affecting the lives of many Pennsylvanians and Americans;
29 therefore be it

30 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the

1 month of June 2024 as "Myasthenia Gravis Awareness Month" in
2 Pennsylvania; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That all Pennsylvanians be encouraged to learn more
4 about myasthenia gravis and explore ways that we can unite for a
5 cure.