

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1094

Recognizing the significance of Sjögren’s as a serious and systemic autoimmune disease and designating April as “Sjögren’s Awareness Month”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 19, 2024

Mr. MORELLE submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the significance of Sjögren’s as a serious and systemic autoimmune disease and designating April as “Sjögren’s Awareness Month”.

Whereas up to 4,000,000 adults in the United States are living with Sjögren’s;

Whereas Sjögren’s is a systemic autoimmune disease that affects the entire body—

(1) symptoms include extensive dryness throughout the body, including the eyes and mouth, profound fatigue, and chronic pain;

(2) the average age for diagnosis is currently between the ages of 45 and 55, although Sjögren’s can affect all ages; and

(3) the female-to-male ratio for Sjögren’s diagnosis is approximately 9:1;

Whereas the cause of Sjögren's is not known, and there is no single test to diagnose the autoimmune disease;

Whereas Sjögren's is not easily treated and is primarily palliative, with over-the-counter products used to manage dryness symptoms along with off-label prescriptions for anti-inflammatory and disease-modifying therapies;

Whereas individuals living with Sjögren's are often subjected to higher out-of-pocket costs, in order to afford medications to control inflammation and dryness, relieve joint, muscle and nerve pain, reduce acid reflux due to limited saliva production, and treat the devastating complications of oral and other dryness;

Whereas rheumatologists primarily treat individuals with Sjögren's, a wide variety of specialists are involved, including dentists, neurologists, ocular specialists, otolaryngologists, gastroenterologists, nephrologists, and pulmonologists, among others;

Whereas the physical and psychological impact of Sjögren's can severely affect an individual's duties at home and in the workplace;

Whereas there is a need to update the nomenclature to classify Sjögren's as a disease;

Whereas there is a need for more research to understand the pathology that leads to the autoimmune attack in Sjögren's, including the role of the interplay of the immune and nervous systems;

Whereas clinical trials are underway to test the efficacy of targeted therapies that will address the cause of Sjögren's;

Whereas research is underway to identify genes and environmental influences that may contribute to understanding who is susceptible to Sjögren's; and

Whereas more research is needed to identify new therapies to help individuals with Sjögren's manage the symptoms and complications as they age: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes the importance of Sjögren's as a
3 serious health issue that causes a significant health
4 burden;

5 (2) encourages the Department of Health and
6 Human Services and relevant agencies—

7 (A) to identify new areas of research to
8 improve the understanding of the causes and
9 identify biomarkers that will help with patient
10 stratification and diagnosis, disease manage-
11 ment, and development of targeted therapies for
12 Sjögren's patients;

13 (B) to better quantify the number of pa-
14 tients suffering from Sjögren's as many are be-
15 lieved to be undiagnosed or are misdiagnosed;

16 (C) to update and disseminate literature
17 on Sjögren's to public health professionals to
18 increase awareness for the condition; and

19 (D) to build awareness among physicians
20 and communities in underserved areas so that

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- 1 patients are diagnosed correctly and obtain
- 2 needed care.

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