
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 886 Session of
2004

INTRODUCED BY SCHRODER, ARGALL, BALDWIN, BARRAR, BASTIAN, BEBKO-JONES, BELARDI, BROWNE, CLYMER, CORRIGAN, CRAHALLA, CRUZ, DIGIROLAMO, J. EVANS, FABRIZIO, FICHTER, FLEAGLE, FORCIER, FRANKEL, GABIG, GEIST, GEORGE, GILLESPIE, GINGRICH, GOOD, GOODMAN, GRUCELA, HARHART, HARPER, HENNESSEY, HERSHEY, HORSEY, JAMES, KILLION, LAUGHLIN, LEDERER, LEH, MAJOR, MARSICO, MCGILL, MUSTIO, PALLONE, PAYNE, PICKETT, READSHAW, ROSS, RUBLEY, SATHER, SAYLOR, SCAVELLO, B. SMITH, TANGRETTI, E. Z. TAYLOR, THOMAS, TIGUE, TRUE, WALKO, WASHINGTON, WOJNAROSKI AND YOUNGBLOOD, OCTOBER 6, 2004

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
OCTOBER 6, 2004

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the week of October 3 through 9, 2004, as "Latex
2 Allergy Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, In 1997, after receiving over 1,700 reports of latex
4 allergy reactions, the United States Food and Drug
5 Administration ordered that any medical device containing latex
6 carry a cautionary label about potential allergic reactions; and

7 WHEREAS, The National Institute of Occupational Safety and
8 Health issued an alert in June 1997 requesting assistance in
9 preventing allergic reactions to natural rubber latex among
10 workers who use gloves and other products containing natural
11 rubber latex; and

12 WHEREAS, The Food and Drug Administration issued final rules
13 that went into effect September 30, 1998, requiring labeling

1 statements concerning the presence of natural rubber latex in
2 medical devices, including device packaging containing natural
3 rubber that contacts humans; and

4 WHEREAS, As of March 1999 the total number of latex allergy
5 reactions associated with latex-containing medical gloves
6 reported to the Food and Drug Administration was 2,330,
7 including five deaths; and

8 WHEREAS, Latex gloves have been used as a tool in the health
9 care industry by health care workers to prevent the transmission
10 of many infectious diseases; and

11 WHEREAS, Latex is used in emergency equipment, personal
12 protective equipment, office supplies and hospital and household
13 supplies; and

14 WHEREAS, Latex is also used in other industries, such as
15 child care, food service and food processing; and

16 WHEREAS, With its growing use, there is more awareness that
17 latex and latex-containing products may trigger an allergic
18 reaction; and

19 WHEREAS, Latex allergy is due to numerous allergenic proteins
20 derived from natural rubber latex; and

21 WHEREAS, The Occupational Safety and Health Administration
22 published a technical information bulletin in April 1999,
23 alerting field personnel to the potential allergic reactions in
24 some individuals using natural rubber latex products. Such
25 reactions to latex may include skin rashes, hives, itching,
26 swollen red skin, swollen lips and tongue, shortness of breath,
27 dizziness, fainting, eye or sinus symptoms, asthma and, on rare
28 occasions, shock; and

29 WHEREAS, Recent reports in scientific literature indicate
30 that from about 1% to 6% of the general population and about 8%

1 to 12% of regularly exposed health care workers are sensitized
2 to natural rubber latex; and

3 WHEREAS, The number of health care workers and others
4 affected will continue to increase because frequent exposure to
5 latex causes the development of the allergy; and

6 WHEREAS, Children with spina bifida and others who have
7 conditions involving multiple surgical procedures are at a
8 greater risk to an allergic reaction to latex due to the need
9 for multiple surgeries; and

10 WHEREAS, The American College of Allergy, Asthma and
11 Immunology estimates that 18 million Americans, 64 out of every
12 1,000, are allergic to latex, including 40% to 65% of children
13 with spina bifida; and

14 WHEREAS, Various support groups across the country have come
15 together to increase public awareness of latex allergies and
16 encourage the endorsement of such efforts across the nation; and

17 WHEREAS, The need to protect the residents, including health
18 care workers, of Pennsylvania against latex allergies is a
19 public health issue, and awareness of the public health threat
20 through education is the key to prevention of latex allergic
21 reactions; therefore be it

22 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the
23 week of October 3 through 9, 2004, as "Latex Allergy Awareness
24 Week" in an effort to urge all Pennsylvanians to become educated
25 about latex allergies.