
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 508 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY FABRIZIO, DONATUCCI, YOUNGBLOOD, BAKER, KINSEY,
KIRKLAND, READSHAW, HENNESSEY, ROZZI, SCHLOSSBERG, D. COSTA,
O'BRIEN, LONGIETTI, DIGIROLAMO, WATSON, V. BROWN, SONNEY,
DUSH, BIZZARRO, McNEILL, WARD, HARHART, ROSS, GINGRICH,
COHEN, MAHONEY, FARINA, O'NEILL, PAYNE, MAJOR, MARSICO,
GILLEN, DeLUCA, SCHWEYER, BISHOP, PASHINSKI, TAYLOR, SAINATO,
KORTZ, NEILSON, WHEELAND, SCHREIBER AND MURT,
SEPTEMBER 22, 2015

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
SEPTEMBER 22, 2015

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of September 2015 as "Dystonia Awareness
2 Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Dystonia is an incurable neurological disorder
4 characterized by involuntary muscle contractions that cause slow
5 repetitive movements or abnormal postures; and

6 WHEREAS, Dystonia is often initiated or worsened by voluntary
7 movements, and symptoms may "overflow" into adjacent muscles;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Dystonia symptoms may be episodic, only occurring
10 during periodic attacks, or they may occur constantly, making
11 dystonia an especially difficult disability to live with; and

12 WHEREAS, There are multiple forms of dystonia, and dozens of
13 diseases and conditions may include dystonia as a symptom that
14 may affect a single body area or be generalized throughout

1 multiple muscle groups; and

2 WHEREAS, Though several treatment options exist, such as
3 physical therapy, oral medication, injections and surgery,
4 results are not consistent and can involve substantial risks,
5 particularly with respect to brain surgeries undertaken to
6 address the most severe cases; and

7 WHEREAS, Even though dystonia affects as many as 750,000
8 people in the United States, one-third of whom are children,
9 public knowledge of the disorder is very limited; and

10 WHEREAS, According to the Bachmann-Strauss Dystonia &
11 Parkinson Foundation, dystonia affects more people than muscular
12 dystrophy, Huntington's disease and Lou Gehrig's disease
13 combined, yet awareness of dystonia is limited; and

14 WHEREAS, Countless friends, loved ones, spouses and
15 caregivers must shoulder the physical, emotional and financial
16 burdens that dystonia causes; and

17 WHEREAS, Due to the severity of the symptoms of dystonia and
18 the limited public awareness of the condition, many people react
19 to the physical manifestations of dystonia by avoiding those
20 affected with the disorder, often causing isolation and deep
21 psychological distress for persons who suffer from the disease;
22 and

23 WHEREAS, For these and many other reasons, greater
24 understanding of dystonia both in the medical and lay
25 communities would substantially benefit those affected, and
26 increased support is needed for efforts to find the causes and
27 improve treatments in order to find a cure for dystonia; and

28 WHEREAS, The dystonia community is uniting to cooperate on
29 awareness efforts throughout September, including the Benign
30 Essential Blepharospasm Research Foundation, DySTonia, Inc., the

1 Dystonia Medical Research Foundation, the National Spasmodic
2 Dysphonia Association and the National Spasmodic Torticollis
3 Association, to foster public awareness and understanding of the
4 disorder, to educate patients and their families about dystonia,
5 to improve treatment and care and to provide support and
6 encourage people to become advocates on behalf of those who are
7 living with this debilitating condition; therefore be it

8 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the
9 month of September 2015 as "Dystonia Awareness Month" in
10 Pennsylvania in recognition of the plight of people suffering
11 from the disorder's painful and debilitating effects in order to
12 foster public understanding, to develop support for finding the
13 causes of the condition and improved treatments and a cure for
14 the disorder and to encourage all residents to aid and support
15 those who are affected.