
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 123 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY MALAGARI AND KINSEY, MAY 24, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, MAY 24, 2023

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing June 29, 2023, as "World Scleroderma Day" in
2 Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Scleroderma is a group of rare autoimmune diseases
4 that involve the hardening and tightening of the skin and
5 connective tissues; and

6 WHEREAS, Scleroderma affects women more often than men and
7 most commonly occurs between the ages of 30 and 50; and

8 WHEREAS, There are various types of scleroderma, some of
9 which harm the skin, while other variations cause damage to
10 structures beyond the skin, such as blood vessels, internal
11 organs and the digestive tract; and

12 WHEREAS, Scleroderma affecting the skin causes a hardening
13 and tightening of patches, which may be shaped like ovals or
14 straight lines, or cover wide areas of the body; and

15 WHEREAS, The number, location and size of the patches vary by
16 type of scleroderma; and

17 WHEREAS, Skin can appear shiny because it is so tight, and
18 movement of the affected area may be restricted; and

1 WHEREAS, One of the earliest signs of systemic scleroderma is
2 Raynaud's disease, which causes the small blood vessels in a
3 person's fingers and toes to contract in response to cold
4 temperatures or emotional distress, which can cause pain,
5 numbness or a change in color; and

6 WHEREAS, Scleroderma can cause a variety of digestive
7 symptoms, depending on which part of the digestive tract is
8 affected; and

9 WHEREAS, Some people who have scleroderma may also have
10 problems absorbing nutrients due to overgrowth of bacteria in
11 the intestine; and

12 WHEREAS, Scleroderma can also affect the function of the
13 heart, lungs or kidneys to varying degrees; and

14 WHEREAS, Scleroderma results from an overproduction and
15 accumulation of collagen in body tissues, which is conjectured
16 to be caused by a combination of factors, including immune
17 system problems, genetics and environmental triggers; and

18 WHEREAS, It is estimated that approximately 300,000 Americans
19 have scleroderma and a third of these individuals have systemic
20 scleroderma; and

21 WHEREAS, Several Pennsylvania university hospitals have
22 devoted centers to scleroderma research programs, including the
23 University of Pennsylvania, Thomas Jefferson University and the
24 University of Pittsburgh; and

25 WHEREAS, While there is no cure for scleroderma, treatment
26 and management methods are many and differ from patient to
27 patient; and

28 WHEREAS, Physicians may prescribe medications to treat or
29 slow skin changes, dilate blood vessels, suppress the immune
30 system, reduce digestive symptoms, prevent infections and

1 relieve pain; and

2 WHEREAS, Physical and occupational therapists that provide
3 pain management and therapies to improve strength and mobility
4 are also used in scleroderma treatment; and

5 WHEREAS, The last and final resort for severe scleroderma
6 patients are stem cell transplants or organ transplants for
7 lungs or kidneys; and

8 WHEREAS, In some cases, the skin problems associated with
9 scleroderma fade away on their own in two to five years, while
10 scleroderma that impacts internal organs tends to worsen over
11 time; and

12 WHEREAS, It is vitally important for all Pennsylvanians to be
13 aware of the signs, symptoms, educational resources and
14 treatment options for scleroderma; therefore be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize June
16 29, 2023, as "World Scleroderma Day" in Pennsylvania.