

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 6, 2012
TO: ALL HOUSE MEMBERS
FROM: REP. DAN DEASY
SUBJECT: Co-sponsorship of Resolution – “Mitochondrial Disease Awareness Week” in Pennsylvania

I am introducing a resolution designating the week of September 16 through 22, 2012, as “Mitochondrial Disease Awareness Week” in Pennsylvania.

Mitochondria are the power plants in every cell of a person’s body and create more than 90% of the energy needed by the body to sustain life and support growth. When mitochondria fail, cell injury and cell death follow, and if the process is repeated throughout the body, whole systems begin to fail.

Mitochondrial diseases can cause isolated symptoms like seizures, low blood counts, blindness, deafness, dementia, heart failure and progressive muscle weakness, but more often they cause failure of several organ systems in sequence.

Mitochondrial diseases can affect any person at any age. It is estimated that more than one in 4,000 children born in the United States each year will develop a mitochondrial disease by 10 years of age. Since mitochondrial disorders mimic other diseases, it is believed that they are under diagnosed.

Currently no cures or effective therapies exist, but early diagnosis can help patients and their families use proper medication and nutritional supplements to improve the quality of life, and even prolong life. I believe it is important that all citizens of Pennsylvania are informed about mitochondrial diseases and their impact.

If you would like to co-sponsor this resolution, please email Louise in my office at lkoppenh@pahouse.net or call my office at 772-8187.