

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 283 Session of  
2019

INTRODUCED BY KULIK, BIZZARRO, HILL-EVANS, RYAN, HENNESSEY,  
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FREEMAN AND NEILSON, APRIL 30, 2019

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
APRIL 30, 2019

## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of June 2019 as "Myasthenia Gravis  
2 Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Myasthenia gravis (MG) is a chronic autoimmune  
4 neuromuscular disease characterized by varying degrees of  
5 weakness of the skeletal muscles of the body; and

6 WHEREAS, MG first appeared in medical reports in 1672, but  
7 did not earn its name, myasthenia gravis, which literally means  
8 grave muscular weakness, until its adoption by the Berlin  
9 Society of Psychiatry and Neurology in November 1899; and

10 WHEREAS, MG is caused by a defect in the transmission of  
11 nerve impulses to muscles, whereby antibodies effectively block,  
12 alter or destroy the nerve cell receptors that generate muscle  
13 contraction; and

14 WHEREAS, MG is classified as an autoimmune disease due to the  
15 fact that in cases involving MG the immune system, which  
16 normally protects the body from foreign organisms, mistakenly

1 sets upon a course to attack itself; and

2 WHEREAS, The prevalence rate of MG in the United States is an  
3 estimated 14 to 20 out of every 100,000 people; and

4 WHEREAS, MG is indiscriminate in its affliction, as MG can  
5 occur in all ethnic groups and genders, but primarily occurs in  
6 young adult women under 40 years of age and men over 60 years of  
7 age; and

8 WHEREAS, It is important to note that MG is not hereditary,  
9 nor is it contagious, and, in most cases, MG's symptoms manifest  
10 in the form of weakness of the eye muscles, difficulty in  
11 swallowing, slurred or impaired speech, shortness of breath and  
12 weakness in the arms, hands, fingers, legs or neck; and

13 WHEREAS, Since weakness is a common symptom of many  
14 disorders, the diagnosis of MG is often overlooked or  
15 unnecessarily deferred; and

16 WHEREAS, Approximately 15% to 20% of individuals with MG  
17 experience at least one myasthenic crisis in their lifetime, in  
18 which the muscles that control breathing weaken to the point  
19 where a ventilator is required to breathe; and

20 WHEREAS, MG can generally be treated and controlled with the  
21 use of medications, therapies or surgical procedures that  
22 include anticholinesterase agents, immunosuppressive drugs,  
23 plasmapheresis, intravenous immunoglobulins or a thymectomy,  
24 which is the removal of the thymus gland; and

25 WHEREAS, The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and  
26 Stroke, a component of the National Institutes of Health,  
27 maintains the primary responsibility of conducting and  
28 supporting research on brain and nervous system disorders,  
29 including MG; and

30 WHEREAS, Organizations such as the Myasthenia Gravis

1 Foundation of America (MGFA), the Muscular Dystrophy Association  
2 and the Myasthenia Gravis Association of Western Pennsylvania  
3 (MGAWP) at Allegheny General Hospital are leading the effort to  
4 foster a greater degree of education and outreach relating to  
5 MG; and

6 WHEREAS, The MGFA's research committee has been instrumental  
7 in supporting research that aims to improve the lives of  
8 patients with MG by creating a comprehensive MG Patient Registry  
9 and designating several broad research priorities, which include  
10 biomarkers, mechanisms of disease, therapeutic strategies and  
11 improving patient outcomes; and

12 WHEREAS, The MGAWP's treatment and advocacy center has played  
13 an integral role in providing first-rate medical care and social  
14 and emotional support to Pennsylvanians living with MG; and

15 WHEREAS, The observance of "Myasthenia Gravis Awareness  
16 Month" provides additional outreach and education concerning MG  
17 by informing the general public about MG's seriousness and  
18 raising funds to help affected individuals; and

19 WHEREAS, Organizations like MGFA and MGAWP utilize the  
20 observance of "Myasthenia Gravis Awareness Month" to encourage  
21 the general public and those living with MG to make effective  
22 use of their social media platforms to spread greater awareness  
23 about MG, engage close friends, relatives and others to attend  
24 an MG screening, contribute financially to organizations  
25 supporting the fight against MG and create awareness about MG in  
26 their workplaces, organizations, schools and social circles; and

27 WHEREAS, The purpose of this resolution is to further the  
28 laudable and worthwhile mission of MG advocates across the  
29 nation to advance knowledge and awareness of a disorder  
30 affecting the lives of many Pennsylvanians and Americans;

1   therefore be it

2       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the  
3   month of June 2019 as "Myasthenia Gravis Awareness Month" in  
4   Pennsylvania; and be it further

5       RESOLVED, That all Pennsylvanians be encouraged to learn more  
6   about myasthenia gravis and explore ways that we can unite for a  
7   cure.