
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 471 Session of
2024

INTRODUCED BY KINSEY, MALAGARI, GIRAL, HILL-EVANS, SCHLOSSBERG,
CURRY, SANCHEZ, DALEY AND BELLMON, JUNE 7, 2024

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, JUNE 7, 2024

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of June 2024 as "Scleroderma Awareness
2 Month" and June 29, 2024, as "World Scleroderma Day" in
3 Pennsylvania.

4 WHEREAS, Scleroderma is a rare group of autoimmune diseases
5 that makes the skin harden and tighten, which may cause issues
6 in the blood vessels, gastrointestinal tract, heart and lungs;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Across the world, 2.5 million individuals have
9 scleroderma, including approximately 300,000 individuals in the
10 United States; and

11 WHEREAS, Systemic scleroderma affects the skin as well as the
12 internal organs; and

13 WHEREAS, One-third of those with scleroderma have systemic
14 scleroderma, 80% of which are women; and

15 WHEREAS, African Americans have a high risk of systemic
16 scleroderma, and 70% of individuals with systemic scleroderma
17 are African Americans; and

18 WHEREAS, Scleroderma commonly occurs between the ages of 25

1 and 55; and

2 WHEREAS, Symptoms commonly affect the face, feet, fingers,
3 and hands first, and early symptoms include hardening and
4 tightening of the skin, swelling and itchiness; and

5 WHEREAS, Diagnosis may include physical exams, laboratory
6 tests for antibodies, skin biopsies, computerized tomography,
7 echocardiograms and pulmonary function tests; and

8 WHEREAS, There is not a cure for scleroderma, but treatment
9 may include medications to dilate blood vessels, suppress the
10 immune system, reduce stomach acid, prevent infections of ulcers
11 caused by Raynaud's phenomenon and alleviate pain, in addition
12 to physical and occupational therapies and stem cell and organ
13 transplants; and

14 WHEREAS, Symptoms associated with scleroderma may decrease on
15 their own in two to five years, while systemic scleroderma,
16 which damages the internal organs, continues to worsen; and

17 WHEREAS, Thomas Jefferson University, the University of
18 Pennsylvania, the University of Pittsburgh and other entities in
19 Pennsylvania continue to research scleroderma, enabling
20 individuals to receive treatment to mitigate their symptoms; and

21 WHEREAS, Awareness of rare diseases such as scleroderma
22 assists in individuals' knowledge about the symptoms, research
23 to treat these rare diseases and providing supports to
24 individuals with rare diseases; therefore be it

25 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
26 month of June 2024 as "Scleroderma Awareness Month" and June 29,
27 2024, as "World Scleroderma Day" in Pennsylvania.