

---

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

---

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 160 Session of  
2023

---

INTRODUCED BY CAPPELLETTI, FONTANA, HAYWOOD, TARTAGLIONE,  
SCHWANK, KEARNEY, COMITTA, MARTIN, SANTARSIERO AND COSTA,  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

---

REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

---

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing September 13, 2023, as "Celiac Awareness Day" in  
2 Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, September 13 has been nationally recognized as  
4 "National Celiac Awareness Day"; and

5 WHEREAS, According to the Celiac Disease Foundation, celiac  
6 disease is a serious autoimmune disease that occurs in  
7 genetically predisposed people where the ingestion of gluten  
8 leads to damage in the small intestine; and

9 WHEREAS, Celiac disease is estimated to impact 1 in 100  
10 people worldwide and approximately 3 million Americans,  
11 including more than 129,000 Pennsylvanians; and

12 WHEREAS, Researchers are finding that celiac disease  
13 prevalence is doubling approximately every 15 years, making it a  
14 growing public health concern; and

15 WHEREAS, For people with celiac disease, gluten, a protein  
16 found in wheat, barley and rye, is poisonous; and

17 WHEREAS, Even a trace amount, such as a crumb, can trigger an

1 immune response leading the body to attack the small intestine;  
2 and

3 WHEREAS, This intestinal damage can cause more than 200  
4 debilitating symptoms; and

5 WHEREAS, According to the University of Chicago Celiac  
6 Disease Center, gluten ingestion for people with celiac disease  
7 causes permanent immunological scarring, doubles the risk of  
8 heart disease and acts as a carcinogen, quadrupling the risk of  
9 small intestinal cancers; and

10 WHEREAS, Celiac disease research is severely underfunded in  
11 proportion to the scale of the disease, treatment burden and  
12 lack of available treatment options; and

13 WHEREAS, According to an analysis published in 2017 by the  
14 American Gastroenterological Association titled "Disparities  
15 Among Gastrointestinal Disorders in Research Funding from the  
16 National Institutes of Health," celiac disease receives the  
17 lowest amount of National Institutes of Health funding over a  
18 five-year period; and

19 WHEREAS, This funding averaged \$3 million annually or \$1 for  
20 every person with celiac disease; and

21 WHEREAS, Celiac disease research also received the lowest  
22 amount of National Institutes of Health grants; and

23 WHEREAS, Currently, a strictly gluten-free lifetime diet is  
24 the only way to manage the disease, and this is inadequate given  
25 that 80% of foods contain gluten, there is a constant risk of  
26 cross-contamination and gluten is not required to be labeled on  
27 packaged foods in the United States; and

28 WHEREAS, On April 26, 2023, the Food Labeling Modernization  
29 Act of 2023 was introduced in the United States Congress,  
30 legislation which would make gluten the 10th major food allergen

1 and require that gluten be labeled on all packaged foods in the  
2 United States, bringing the country into alignment with 62 other  
3 countries around the world, including Canada and across Europe;  
4 and

5 WHEREAS, The connection between celiac disease and diet was  
6 first established by Dr. Samuel Gee who wrote "if the patient  
7 can be cured at all, it must be by means of diet"; and

8 WHEREAS, "Celiac Awareness Day" is observed each year on  
9 September 13 to coincide with the birthday of Dr. Gee on  
10 September 13, 1869; and

11 WHEREAS, The Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is an  
12 institution that can raise awareness for celiac disease with the  
13 general public and the medical community; therefore be it

14 RESOLVED, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
15 recognize September 13, 2023, as "Celiac Awareness Day" in  
16 Pennsylvania; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
18 encourage the 118th Congress to take action to support greater  
19 funding for research into celiac disease; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
21 encourage the 118th Congress to pass the Food Labeling  
22 Modernization Act of 2023; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to  
24 the presiding officers of each House of Congress and to each  
25 member of Congress from Pennsylvania.