
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 326 Session of
2024

INTRODUCED BY CAPPELLETTI, FONTANA, MARTIN, HUTCHINSON, HUGHES,
COMITTA, HAYWOOD, BROWN AND VOGEL, SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing September 13, 2024, 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 133
10 people worldwide and approximately 2 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
18 immune response leading the body to attack the small intestine;

1 and

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

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

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

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

18 WHEREAS, This funding averaged \$3 million annually or \$1.50
19 for every person with celiac disease in the United States; and

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

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

27 WHEREAS, On April 26, 2023, the Food Labeling Modernization
28 Act of 2023 was introduced in the United States Congress,
29 legislation which would make gluten the 10th major food allergen
30 and require that gluten be labeled on all packaged foods in the

1 United States, bringing the country into alignment with 62 other
2 countries around the world, including Canada and across Europe;
3 and

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

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

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

13 RESOLVED, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
14 recognize September 13, 2024, as "Celiac Awareness Day" in
15 Pennsylvania; and be it further

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

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

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