2023-J2379

Senate Resolution No. 2379

BY: Senator MAY

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim
May 12-18, 2024, as Fibromyalgia Awareness Week in
the State of New York

WHEREAS, The State of New York takes great pride in recognizing official months established to increase awareness of serious health issues that affect the lives of all New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 12-18, 2024, as Fibromyalgia Awareness Week in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Fibromyalgia Awareness Week; and

WHEREAS, An estimated 10 million people in the United States, and an estimated 3-6 percent of the world's population, generally between ages 20-50, have been diagnosed with fibromyalgia; in the United States, this number increases to approximately 8 percent by age 80, according to the National Fibromyalgia Association; and

WHEREAS, A chronic syndrome with no known prevention or cure, that is increasing at alarming rates, fibromyalgia causes debilitating widespread chronic pain and fatigue; has a demonstrated genetic component; occurs in women, men, and children of all ages and ethnicities; and demonstrates some similarities with Long Covid, signaling an increased need for more research funding; and

WHEREAS, Patients with fibromyalgia often have to live with widespread pain throughout their bodies, extreme fatigue, sleep disorders, digestive difficulties, stiffness and weakness, migraine headaches, numbness and tingling, and impairment of memory and concentration; and

WHEREAS, The average gap between medical research and clinical practice is 17 years, and it often takes an average of five years to receive a diagnosis of fibromyalgia; and

WHEREAS, Fibromyalgia patients are often misunderstood by the medical, business, and education communities, primarily due to the lack of teaching in medical schools about what is currently known regarding this potentially disabling illness; and

WHEREAS, Chronic pain is a risk factor for suicide, as individuals with chronic pain are at least twice as likely to report suicidal behaviors or to complete suicide; as part of their global initiative, the World Health Organization recommends that a comprehensive clinical assessment of suicidal behaviors be routinely performed on all individuals 10 years of age or older who report having chronic pain; and

WHEREAS, According to a fact sheet provided by the National Fibromyalgia Association, 90% of physicians agree there is a need for more physician-oriented information, and 82% of physicians agree that fibromyalgia is difficult to treat with currently available tools; use

of complementary and alternative medicine is 2 1/2 times higher in fibromyalgia patients; and

WHEREAS, The NIH reports that average direct costs above insurance, over a three-month period, added up to $951, which could be translated in a mean annual cost of $3,804 per patient; and

WHEREAS, Fibromyalgia patients often lose jobs, career promotion opportunities, homes, and spouses or significant others due to lack of awareness and understanding about the potentially devastating impact of this illness; and

WHEREAS, Patients report that the optimal approach to treating fibromyalgia is a team of physicians, with traditional and complementary therapists, tailoring the treatment for each individual patient; this can be accomplished best in an arrangement that facilitates communication between the patient and the team; and

WHEREAS, International Institute For Human Empowerment, Inc., a nonprofit charitable organization in the Capital District of New York, is dedicated to empowering all who face discrimination as a result of race, gender, socioeconomic status, age, disabilities, and lifestyle choices; and

WHEREAS, The International Institute For Human Empowerment, Inc., under the leadership of Sue Shipe, PhD, developed the Fibromyalgia Task Force of New York State to address inequities in the diagnosis and treatment of fibromyalgia patients due to lack of education in medical schools and continuing education for physicians, lack of understanding by society at large, lack of understanding and adequate accommodations by employers, and lack of legal protections due to the general lack of recognition of the devastating impact of this illness; and

WHEREAS, The Fibromyalgia Task Force of New York State serves patients across the State, provides education and advocacy nationally, and shares information internationally; and

WHEREAS, The Fibromyalgia Task Force of New York State is announcing the immediate release of their new website for physicians, www.nyfibro.org, that provides an overview of current fibromyalgia research with implications for new treatments, as well as a section of resources that patients have found helpful for dealing with the symptoms of fibromyalgia; and

WHEREAS, The Fibromyalgia Task Force of New York State recommends the formation of a statewide committee comprised of patients, researchers, physicians, and legislators; business, education, and public health leaders; attorneys; complementary therapists; and others to address issues relevant to fibromyalgia; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body recognizes the needs of those chronically ill people who suffer from fibromyalgia, and urges all of our citizens to support the search for prevention and a cure, and assist those families who deal with this devastating syndrome on a daily basis; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 12-18, 2024, as Fibromyalgia Awareness Week in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York, International Institute For Human Empowerment, Inc., Integrated Tissue Dynamics, Albany Medical Center, New York State Department of Health, Medical Society of the State of New York, and SUNY at Albany Department of Public Health.