

## 2015-J2049

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim May 10-17, 2015, as Fibromyalgia Awareness Week in the State of New York

WHEREAS, An estimated 10 million people in the United States, and an estimated 3-6 percent of the world's population, have been diagnosed with Fibromyalgia (FM), an illness for which there is yet no known cause or cure; and

WHEREAS, A chronic syndrome that is increasing at alarming rates, Fibromyalgia causes debilitating widespread pain and fatigue, appears to have a genetic component, and occurs in women, men, and children of all ethnicities; and

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

WHEREAS, It often takes an average of five years to receive a diagnosis of Fibromyalgia, and medical professionals frequently are inadequately educated regarding the diagnosis and treatment of Fibromyalgia; and

WHEREAS, A 2007 study found that FM patients spend between \$100-\$1,000 per month above insurance costs to see healthcare providers. Costs in the United States are estimated between \$12-14 billion per year and account for loss of 1-2% of the nation's productivity; and

WHEREAS, According to a survey of 1,168 FM patients, 25% had received disability payments, and total healthcare costs may be 2-3 times higher than patients without FM; failure to diagnose and adequately treat Fibromyalgia has deep financial implications for patients and for the healthcare system; 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 FM is difficult to treat with currently available tools; use of complementary and alternative medicine is 2 1/2 times higher in FM patients; and

WHEREAS, Increased awareness and expanded knowledge of the realities of life with Fibromyalgia will allow the community at large to better support people who struggle with the challenges of this chronic pain disorder; and

WHEREAS, A nonprofit charitable organization, the National Fibromyalgia and Chronic Pain Association (NFMCPA) has joined together with other groups around the country, including the International Institute For Human Empowerment, Inc., based in New York State, to promote Fibromyalgia awareness and support, including improved education, diagnosis, research and treatment; and

WHEREAS, The International Institute For Human Empowerment, Inc. (IIHE), a non-profit organization in the Capital District of New York, is the sponsor of various Fibromyalgia awareness events, as well as, the Select Empowerment Seminar report: "Fibromyalgia: Awareness, Advocacy, and Action", encouraging the medical community, patients, employers, government health and human rights agencies, educators, and caregivers, to work together to support and improve the lives of Fibromyalgia patients; and

WHEREAS, The International Institute For Human Empowerment, through the leadership of its Founder and Executive Director Sue Shipe, Ph.D., recently initiated a Fibromyalgia Task Force with the stated intentions: to secure support for a new edition of "Fibromyalgia: Awareness, Advocacy and Action", of which 5,000 reports have already been distributed

locally, nationally, and internationally; to create a scholarship for Fibromyalgia patients to access complementary therapies which are not covered by insurance; and to provide continued public conferences

regarding new research findings regarding Fibromyalgia; and

WHEREAS, To address the concern that the average time to Fibromyalgia diagnosis is five years, the Fibromyalgia Task Force will provide Legislative awareness, and seek Legislative action, to improve physician education by supporting medical schools in New York State to provide Fibromyalgia education for physicians; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body recognizes the generous efforts of two of its outstanding citizens on behalf of Fibromyalgia patients residing in New York State: Dorota L. Hausner-Sypek, M.D., of the Center for Rheumatology, Bone and Joint Center, Albany, New York, supports many patients with Fibromyalgia and other Rheumatic illnesses, and collaborates with the International Institute For Human Empowerment in distributing to patients and other physicians copies of the report:

"Fibromyalgia: Awareness, Advocacy and Action"; she has spoken at, and has been a resource for Fibromyalgia Conferences in the Capital District of New York; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body recognizes the critical work of Social Security Disability Attorney Ira Mendleson, III, Esq., of Buckley, Mendleson, Criscione and Quinn, P.C., of Albany, New York, for providing outstanding service to Fibromyalgia patients; Mr. Mendleson presented at the Select Empowerment Seminar on Fibromyalgia in regard to the application process for Social Security Disability; contributed an expert article for the report, "Fibromyalgia: Awareness, Advocacy and Action"; and has presented at Fibromyalgia conferences in the Capital District of New York; Mr. Mendleson is also a valuable resource on the Fibromyalgia Task Force of the International Institute For Human Empowerment; and

WHEREAS, The work of Dorota L. Hausner-Sypek, M.D., and Ira Mendleson, III, Esq., is greatly valued, especially by those patients whose lives, families and careers have been disrupted by Fibromyalgia; and

WHEREAS, Medical research in the Capital District of New York is making significant progress in the area of Fibromyalgia and chronic pain, and deserves the support of the people of New York; and

WHEREAS, The community's focus on Fibromyalgia and its impact on patients' lives will help guarantee hope for a better future for people with Fibromyalgia; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body recognizes the needs of those chronically ill people who suffer from Fibromyalgia, and urges all of our

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citizens to support the search for a cure and assist those individuals and 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 Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim May 10-17, 2015, 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 Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York; the International Institute For Human Empowerment, Inc.; the Center for Rheumatology, Bone and Joint Center, Albany, New York; and Buckley, Mendleson, Criscione and Quinn, P.C., Albany, New York.