

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing September 13, 2021, 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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, According to an analysis published in 2017 by the
American Gastroenterological Association titled "Disparities
Among Gastrointestinal Disorders in Research Funding from the
National Institutes of Health," Celiac Disease receives the
lowest amount of National Institutes of Health funding over a
five-year period; and

WHEREAS, This funding averaged \$3 million annually or \$1 for
every person with Celiac Disease; and

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

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

WHEREAS, On August 4, 2021, the Food Labeling Modernization
Act of 2021 was introduced in the United States Congress,
legislation which would make gluten the tenth major food

1 allergen and require that gluten be labeled on all packaged
2 foods in the United States, bringing the country into alignment
3 with 62 other countries around the world, including Canada and
4 across Europe; 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, 2021, as "Celiac Awareness Day" in
16 Pennsylvania; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
18 encourage the 117th 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 117th Congress to pass the Food Labeling
22 Modernization Act of 2021; 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.