

BY: Senator AKSHAR

MEMORIALIZING Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim
September 2021, as Pulmonary Fibrosis Awareness
Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official months that are set aside to increase awareness of serious illnesses that affect the lives of citizens of New York State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim September 2021, as Pulmonary Fibrosis Awareness Month in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Pulmonary Fibrosis is a disease of the lungs which occurs when lung tissue becomes damaged and scarred; when the tissue around the air sacs in the lungs thickens, it is more difficult for oxygen to pass into the bloodstream causing those with pulmonary fibrosis to become progressively more short of breath; and

WHEREAS, Scarring associated with pulmonary fibrosis can be caused by many factors making it difficult for doctors to pinpoint the specific cause of the problem, and in most cases the cause is never found; when a definite cause cannot be found, the condition is termed Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF); and

WHEREAS, The symptoms of pulmonary fibrosis vary from person to person and include shortness of breath, a dry cough, fatigue, weight loss, and aching muscles and joints; and

WHEREAS, A lack of clinical understanding of IPF often leads to misdiagnosis, and it is estimated more than 50 percent of IPF patients may be initially misdiagnosed delaying treatment and the ability to perform adequate clinical trials; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated approximately 130,000 Americans have IPF although there are published estimates suggesting the number may be as high as 200,000; and

WHEREAS, IPF is found in equal proportions in urban and rural environments but affects more men than women, the majority of whom are 50 years of age or older; and

WHEREAS, The average life expectancy from the diagnosis of the IPF is just 2.8 years, and as many as 80 percent of IPF patients die within five years of diagnosis; and

WHEREAS, Pulmonary fibrosis takes the lives of 40,000 or more individuals in the United States each year, approximately one individual every 13 minutes; and

WHEREAS, Researchers have several theories on the causes of IPF including: viruses; exposure to tobacco smoke; airborne toxins in the workplace such as silica dust, asbestos fibers, grain dust, bird and animal droppings; certain lung diseases; and even some types of medical treatments; since IPF often runs in families, heredity is also believed to play a role; and

WHEREAS, The lung scarring that occurs in pulmonary fibrosis cannot be reversed and no current treatment has proved effective in stopping the progression of the disease although some treatments may improve symptoms temporarily or slow the disease's progress; and

WHEREAS, Lung transplantation may be the option of last resort for patients with severe IPF; and

WHEREAS, As of July 2018, there are no confirmed biomarkers for screening and testing for pulmonary fibrosis; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative there be greater public awareness of this serious health condition, and more must be done to encourage research and activity at the State, local and national levels to support the patients as well as their families; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, This this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim September 2021, as Pulmonary Fibrosis Awareness Month in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause further to continue to support more robust and accelerated research to develop more effective treatments for pulmonary fibrosis and to ultimately find a cure for the disease; recognize the courage and contributions of individuals with pulmonary fibrosis who participate in vital clinical trials to advance the knowledge of the disease; and commend the dedication of organizations, volunteers and researchers from the State of New York working to improve the quality of life for individuals with pulmonary fibrosis and the families of those individuals; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York.