Assembly Resolution No. 484

BY: M. of A. Solages

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 11-17, 2025, 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, 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 must 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 2.5 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 $3804 per patient; and estimates for the total annual direct costs per patient ranged from $1750 to $35,920 in the USA; and

WHEREAS, The National Fibromyalgia Association reports that over 60% of their Fibromyalgia study participants currently use or have used CBD for symptoms primarily to treat pain, anxiety, sleep problems, joint stiffness, and muscle spasms, indicating a need for more rigorous studies in order to develop guidance for physicians; 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 Fibromyalgia; and

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

WHEREAS, The Fibromyalgia Task Force of New York State is celebrating two years since the release of their new website for Physicians, www.nyfibro.org, that provides an overview of current Fibromyalgia Research with implications for new treatments, a section of resources that patients have found helpful for dealing with the symptoms of Fibromyalgia, and has been visited approximately 17,000 time;. the International Institute For Human Empowerment website, which includes our Fibromyalgia activities since 2007, has been visited over 306,000 times; and

WHEREAS, The Fibromyalgia Task Force of New York State, which also maintains a Facebook Page of approximately 2,600 followers, is working toward a vision of multiple Centers For Excellence for Fibromyalgia to assist in meeting the current lack of understanding, timely diagnosis, and affordable treatments facing Fibromyalgia patients; 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 11-17, 2025, 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; Albany Medical Center; New York State Department of Health; Medical Society of the State of New York; SUNY at Albany Department of Public Health; and Fibromyalgia Task Force of New York State.