

March 15, 2021

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Chairman, Energy & Commerce  
2107 Rayburn House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Ranking Member, Energy & Commerce  
1035 Longworth House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone and Ranking Member Rodgers:

The undersigned organizations have joined together to ask for your support for House Resolution 135, introduced by Congresswoman Doris Matsui, which would designate May 2021 as "Spondyloarthritis Awareness Month."

Spondyloarthritis is the name given to a family of closely related, chronic rheumatic diseases that affect an estimated 3.2 million adults in the United States. While one in every 100 Americans is impacted by spondyloarthritis, there still exists a lack of awareness about these debilitating diseases, which in turn contributes to lengthy delays in diagnosis. Diagnoses of spondyloarthritis can be delayed between 7-10 years on average, often resulting in health complications and increased potential of disability.

Painful symptoms of spondyloarthritis can emerge as early as childhood but typically present themselves before the age of 45. Risks of spondyloarthritis include spinal fusion and increased likelihood of bone fractures, postural abnormalities such as a forward curvature of the upper back, or eroded joints especially the hips and shoulders.

There is no known cure, but early diagnosis is critical to effectively treat the disease, prevent complications, and most importantly to improve the quality of life and physical function for those living with spondyloarthritis. Supporting the designation of May as Spondyloarthritis Awareness Month will heighten public awareness of this disease and its symptoms with the ultimate goal of reducing the delay in diagnosis and improving health outcomes for our communities living with spondyloarthritis.

For these reasons, we ask you to support House Resolution 135. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration. Should you have questions please contact Richard A. Howard of the Spondylitis Association of America at [richard.howard@spondylitis.org](mailto:richard.howard@spondylitis.org).

Sincerely,

Alliance for Patient Access  
American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association (AARDA)  
American College of Rheumatology  
Arthritis Foundation  
CreakyJoints

Infusion Access Foundation

International Foundation for Autoimmune & Autoinflammatory Arthritis (AiArthritis)

Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.

National Infusion Center Association

National Pain Advocacy Center

National Spine Health Foundation

Patient Authentic

Patients Rising

SPARTAN

Spondylitis Association of America

US Pain Foundation

Walk AS One

WEGO Health

CC: Members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee

