

106<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. CON. RES. 387

Promoting latex allergy awareness, research, and treatment.

---

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 27, 2000

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce

---

## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Promoting latex allergy awareness, research, and treatment.

Whereas the primary goals of National Latex Allergy Awareness Week are—

(1) to support funding to promote research related to all aspects of latex allergy including pathophysiology, causative factors, diagnostics, immunotherapy, treatment standards, and prevention strategies;

(2) to educate the general public, latex allergy patients and caregivers, as well as health care providers, through programs, publications, and other media allowing for more awareness and diagnostic, management, and prevention strategies of latex allergy;

(3) to recognize the prevalence of latex allergy as a public health issue in the general population and to promote national product standards allowing universal access to safe health care, including emergency medical

services, fire fighting, and law enforcement personnel by all latex allergic patients; and

(4) to promote consumer, patient, and worker safety by mandating product labeling for all natural rubber latex or rubber-containing products consistent with the Food and Drug Administration's labelling of natural rubber latex medical products;

Whereas the Food and Drug Administration reports that scientific and clinical data demonstrate that certain proteins found in natural rubber latex harvested from the rubber tree *Hevea brasiliensis* are allergenic and, in some instances, may cause severe allergic reactions;

Whereas the Food and Drug Administration also reports that there remains a discrepancy over whether cornstarch powder used as a medical product lubricant could be one of many possible vehicles for exposure to latex proteins;

Whereas glove use, primarily latex gloves, increased eightfold in the year following the 1987 universal precautions mandated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention requiring the use of protective barriers, including gloves;

Whereas latex exposure is ubiquitous and over 40,000 consumer products contain natural rubber latex;

Whereas adverse events reported to the Food and Drug Administration caused by latex gloves and other latex-containing products include dermatitis, edema, hives, itching, rhinitis, conjunctivitis, asthma, difficulty breathing, anaphylaxis, and, in some instances, death;

Whereas as of March 1999, the total number of latex allergy reactions associated with latex-containing medical gloves reported to the Food and Drug Administration was

2,330, including reports of 21 deaths, 5 of which were associated with latex gloves;

Whereas an extremely small percentage of the population may have an allergic reaction to natural rubber latex;

Whereas the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued an alert in June 1997 requesting assistance in preventing allergic reactions to natural rubber latex among workers who use gloves and other products containing latex;

Whereas it is vital that the American public become better educated regarding the signs and symptoms of latex allergy as well as prevention strategies; and

Whereas increased public awareness of possible exposure routes and natural rubber latex-containing medical and nonmedical products, including environmental exposure from powdered gloves and balloons, food contaminated by workers wearing latex gloves, and thousands of consumer products may help prevent allergic reactions to natural rubber latex among patients, workers, and the general public, as well as reduce the number of people who develop latex allergy: Now, therefore, be it

1        *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*  
2 *concurring), That—*

3            (1) the Congress should establish research  
4            funding, as recommended by the American College  
5            of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, so that the  
6            causes of latex allergy, as well as improved diag-

1 nostic, management, and prevention strategies, and  
2 a cure for those affected, may be discovered;

3 (2) a National Latex Allergy Week should be  
4 established to raise public awareness about latex al-  
5 lergy and the importance of the early detection,  
6 proper management, and practical prevention tac-  
7 tics; and

8 (3) the President should issue a proclamation  
9 calling on the people of the United States and inter-  
10 ested organizations to observe such a week with ap-  
11 propriate programs and activities.

○