H. RES. 708

Supporting the designation of the week of September 18 through September 23, 2023, as “Malnutrition Awareness Week”.

RESOLUTION

Supporting the designation of the week of September 18 through September 23, 2023, as “Malnutrition Awareness Week”.

Whereas malnutrition is the condition that occurs when a person does not get enough protein, calories, or nutrients;

Whereas malnutrition is a significant problem in the United States and around the world, crossing all age, racial, class, gender, and geographic lines;

Whereas malnutrition can be driven by social determinants of health, including poverty or economic instability, access to affordable health care, and low health literacy;
Whereas there are inextricable and cyclical links between poverty and malnutrition;

Whereas the Department of Agriculture defines food insecurity as when a person or household does not have regular, reliable access to the foods needed for good health;

Whereas communities of color, across all age groups, are disproportionately likely to experience both food insecurity and malnutrition;

Whereas Black children are almost 3 times more likely to live in a food-insecure household than White children;

Whereas infants, older adults, people with chronic diseases, and other vulnerable populations are particularly at risk for malnutrition;

Whereas the American Academy of Pediatrics has found that failure to provide key nutrients during early childhood may result in lifelong deficits in brain function;

Whereas disease-associated malnutrition affects between 30 and 50 percent of patients admitted to hospitals, and the medical costs of hospitalized patients with malnutrition can be 300 percent more than the medical costs of properly nourished patients;

Whereas, according to the “National Blueprint: Achieving Quality Malnutrition Care for Older Adults, 2020 Update”, as many as half of older adults living in the United States are malnourished or at risk for malnutrition;

Whereas, according to recent Aging Network surveys, 76 percent of older adults receiving meals at senior centers and other congregate facilities report improved health outcomes, and 84 percent of older adults receiving home-delivered meals indicate the same;
Whereas disease-associated malnutrition in older adults alone
costs the United States more than $51,300,000,000 each
year; and

Whereas the American Society for Parenteral and Enteral
Nutrition established “Malnutrition Awareness Week” to
raise awareness and promote prevention of malnutrition
across the lifespan: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Congress—

(1) supports the designation of “Malnutrition
Awareness Week”;

(2) recognizes registered dietitian nutritionists
and other nutrition professionals, health care pro-
viders, school food service workers, social workers,
advocates, caregivers, and other professionals and
agencies for their efforts to advance awareness,
treatment, and prevention of malnutrition;

(3) recognizes the importance of existing Fed-
eral nutrition programs, like Older Americans Act of
1965 (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) nutrition programs
and Federal child nutrition programs, for their role
in combating malnutrition, and supports increased
funding for these critical programs;

(4) recognizes—

(A) the importance of medical nutrition
therapy under the Medicare Program under
title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42
U.S.C. 1395 et seq.); and
(B) the need for vulnerable populations to have access to nutrition counseling;

(5) recognizes the importance of the innovative research conducted by the National Institutes of Health on—

(A) nutrition, dietary patterns, and the human gastrointestinal microbiome; and

(B) how those factors influence the prevention or development of chronic disease throughout the lifespan;

(6) supports access to malnutrition screening and assessment for all patients;

(7) encourages the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to evaluate the implementation of newly approved malnutrition electronic clinical quality measures; and

(8) acknowledges the importance of healthy food access for children, especially in childcare settings and schools, and the benefits of evidence-based nutrition standards.