



Michael J. Skindell
State Senator
23rd District

Ohio Senate
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, Ohio 43215
(614) 466-5123

Committees:

- Finance – *Ranking Minority Member*
- Civil Justice – *Ranking Minority Member*
- Agriculture
- Criminal Justice
- Finance – General Government Subcommittee
- State Government and Reform

Before the Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Senate Bill 51 – Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Awareness Month - May
Sponsor Testimony by Senator Michael J. Skindell
March 11, 2015

Chairwoman Jones, Vice Chairwoman Lehner, Ranking Member Tavares and members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 51. This legislation designates May as Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Awareness Month.

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) is a devastating and isolating illness that has many different triggers and can start at any age. It may develop after a single particular exposure to a toxic substance such as pesticides or industrial solvents (sometimes from a newly decorated home or office). Others develop sensitivities after a period of ill health or viral infection, with symptoms getting worse over several years.

In 2003, research indicated over 12% of the US population was affected with severe MCS - over 36.5 million people - and statistics have continued to rise¹. Exact numbers of sufferers in the US are still not known but include thousands of soldiers affected by Gulf War Syndrome. Despite this, the medical profession still varies widely in its support and there are currently no clinical guidelines for the treatment of patients.

Individuals with MCS react to far more than one or two items. Severe sufferers cannot tolerate any synthetic or petrochemical substances, and some even react to natural products. Because of modern manufacture, many people with MCS find themselves allergic to practically everything in their homes.

Although symptoms can be managed and sometimes improved, there is currently no known cure. Recovery involves avoidance of as many toxins and problem substances as practicably possible, to allow the body time to heal and prevent irreversible damage. This has a huge impact on everyday life but nutritional therapy and gentle detoxification can help repair the body's systems.

Designating May as the Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Awareness Month gives a voice to those suffering from this illness and a platform from which we can make the public aware of this

¹ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3168894/>

debilitating condition. Chairwoman Jones, Vice Chairwoman Lehner, Ranking Member Tavares and members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee, I would be happy to answer any questions relating to this matter.