

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

PROCLAMATION

NEUROMYELITIS OPTICA SPECTRUM DISORDER AWARENESS MONTH MARCH 2024

WHEREAS, neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorder, more commonly known as NMO, is an uncommon, life-threatening autoimmune disease syndrome of the central nervous system that affects the optic nerves, spinal cord and/or brain; and

WHEREAS, individuals with NMO develop optic neuritis, causing pain in the eye and vision loss, and transverse myelitis, causing weakness, numbness and sometimes paralysis of the arms and legs, along with sensory disturbances and loss of bladder and bowel control; and

WHEREAS, in the disease process of NMO, immune system cells and antibodies attack and destroy myelin cells in the optic nerves and the spinal cord; and

WHEREAS, NMO was previously considered to be a severe variant of multiple sclerosis (MS), as both can cause attacks of optic neuritis and transverse myelitis; however, NMO is different from MS in the severity of its attacks and its tendency to solely strike the optic nerves and spinal cord at the beginning of the disease; and

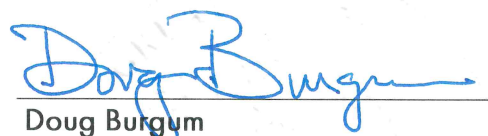
WHEREAS, the antibody NMO-Immunoglobulin G (NMO-IgG) appears present in approximately 70% of individuals diagnosed with NMO, and the NMO-IgG test can be ordered by any primary care physician; and

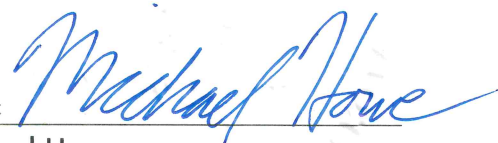
WHEREAS, the cause of NMO is unknown, and there only exists three FDA-approved treatments; and finding a cure for NMO has the potential to help solve other autoimmune diseases including MS, Lupus, Sjögren's and many more; and

WHEREAS, patients, caregivers, scientists, clinicians, industry and regulatory communities in the state of North Dakota join together to spread awareness for NMO.

NOW, THEREFORE, as Governor of the State of North Dakota, I do hereby proclaim
March 2024, NEUROMYELITIS OPTICA SPECTRUM DISORDER AWARENESS
MONTH in the




Doug Burgum
GOVERNOR

ATTEST: 
Michael Howe
SECRETARY OF STATE