



— State of —
North Dakota

Office of the Governor

Doug Burgum
Governor

PROCLAMATION

NEUROMYELITIS OPTICA SPECTRUM DISORDER AWARENESS MONTH
MARCH 2019

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, which causes eye pain and vision loss, and transverse myelitis, which causes 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 differs 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, an antibody known as NMO-Immunoglobulin G (NMO-IgG) appears present in approximately 70 percent of individuals diagnosed with NMO, and the NMO-IgG test can be ordered by any primary care physician; and

WHEREAS, finding a cure for NMO has the potential to help solve other autoimmune diseases including MS, Lupus, Sjögren's, and many more; and

WHEREAS, the Guthy-Jackson Charitable Foundation is organizing March as the annual awareness month for NMO, and the Guthy-Jackson Charitable Foundation, along with patients, caregivers, scientists and clinicians will participate in this observance.

NOW, THEREFORE, as Governor of the State of North Dakota, I do hereby proclaim March 2019, **NEUROMYELITIS OPTICA SPECTRUM DISORDER AWARENESS MONTH** in the State of North Dakota.

A blue ink signature of Doug Burgum, written in a cursive style.

Doug Burgum
Governor

ATTEST:

A blue ink signature of Alvin A. Jaeger, written in a cursive style.

Alvin A. Jaeger
Secretary of State