

ACTION ALERT

Urge Your Member of the House of Representatives to Co-sponsor the Functional Gastrointestinal and Motility Disorders Research Enhancement Act (H.R. 2239)

Background

In an effort to bolster federal research into functional gastrointestinal and motility disorders (FGIMDs) and improve the development of innovative treatment options for these conditions, the International Foundation for Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders (IFFGD) and grassroots advocates have been working with legislators to introduce the first ever federal research bill focused on FGIMDs. We are pleased to announce that as a result of this sustained congressional outreach, the *Functional Gastrointestinal and Motility Disorders Research Enhancement Act* has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives with bill number H.R. 2239. In addition to raising critical awareness of FGIMDs, this landmark legislation grants the National Institutes of Health (NIH) new authority to initiate innovative research projects, establish a centers of excellence program in this area, and coordinate research activities with the Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration when appropriate. Furthermore, H.R. 2239 calls on the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to improve review, approval, and oversight of treatments for FGIMDs. Additional information on H.R. 2239 can be found here: <http://iffgd.org/hr2239>.

The Issue

H.R. 2239 was introduced on a bipartisan basis by Congressman F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr. (R-WI-5th) and Congressman James Moran (D-VA-8th). This means that members of both political parties can support the bill and that the legislation currently has just 2 supporters in Congress. In order for H.R. 2239 to become law and for its research and treatment related provision to take effect, the bill needs more support in the U.S. House of Representatives. Your Representative can support H.R. 2239 by becoming a cosponsor.

Take Action

There are many ways to reach out to your Representatives and ask for their cosponsorship of H.R. 2239. Your outreach can range from a brief e-mail or a quick phone call to joining other advocates in coordinated, sustained congressional outreach. Information on these different opportunities is listed below. Please decide what works best for you, but most importantly, please take action! Please contact the IFFGD's Development Coordinator, Dane Christiansen at dchristiansen@iffgd.org if you have any questions or if you need any assistance with this effort.

Talking Points

To Call Your Representative

- Identify your House Representative by visiting www.house.gov and entering your zip code in the "Find Your Representative" box in the upper right-hand corner of the webpage. Click on their name to be directed to their individual website. Contact information, such as telephone numbers, are typically listed at the bottom of the webpage, or under a tab often labeled "contact me."

- Call your Representatives' Washington, DC office (the 202 number) and ask to speak to the staff member who handles health issues; you will likely receive their voicemail. Be prepared to leave the following message or make the following request over the phone.
- *My name is _____ and I am constituent from [your town or neighborhood]. I ask the Congressman/Congresswoman to become a cosponsor of the bipartisan Functional Gastrointestinal and Motility Disorders Research Enhancement Act, bill number H.R. 2239. **Very briefly explain your FGIMDs story (how they impact or affect you).** To cosponsor this bill, please contact Amy Bos in the office of Congressman F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr. at Amy dot Bos at mail dot house dot gov or 225-5101. Thank you for your time and your consideration of this request.*

[Please note, congressional staffers are very busy and they receive multiple requests a day. In order to ensure they follow through on your request, you may want to call multiple times and leave multiple messages. For example, calling once Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in a week.]

To Email Your Representative

- If you would prefer to send an email to your representative, a webform for this can be found on their personal website (directs of finding this are listed above), and by clicking on the “contact me” tab. Please send the following message via e-mail or submitted through the web form.
- *I write you today as a constituent from [your town or neighborhood] to ask that you please cosponsor the bipartisan Functional Gastrointestinal and Motility Disorders Research Enhancement Act (H.R. 2239). **Very briefly explain your FGIMDs story (how they impact or affect you).** To become a cosponsor of this important legislation, please contact Amy Bos in the office of Congressman F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr. at Amy.Bos@mail.house.gov or 225-5101. Thank you for your time and your consideration of my request.*
[Name]
[Address]

[Please note, in order to ensure your request is acted upon, follow-up is often needed after an e-mail is sent. Consider calling the office a couple times to follow-up on and reiterate your request with the staff.]

To Write Your Representative

This is the most effective form of outreach to ensure that your Representative responds to your request and becomes a cosponsor of H.R. 2239. If you would like to write to your Representative, please contact the IFFGD's Development Coordinator at dchristiansen@iffgd.org. The Foundation will e-mail you a draft letter that includes the official request and you will simply need to add your story and personal information to that letter and e-mail it back to us. We can then have our Washington Representatives hand deliver your letter to the appropriate staff in your Representatives' Washington, DC office.

[Please note, do not mail your letters directly to your Representatives' office. For security reasons they do not arrive for over a month and they have been subjected to many tests, such as for anthrax, that may have damaged them or made them unreadable.]