

Proclamation



Jane Castor, Mayor

WHEREAS, rare and often misunderstood, **Scleroderma** is also known as systemic sclerosis, and it is a group of diseases that involve the hardening and tightening of the skin, and it may also cause problems in the blood vessels, internal organs, digestive tract, muscles and joints whereby the tissues of involved organs become hard and fibrous causing them to function less efficiently; and

WHEREAS, more than 300,000 individuals in the United States, including approximately 25,000 within the state of Florida, live with some type of scleroderma, and the disease includes people of all ages, genders, and backgrounds, and scleroderma presents differently in each person; and

WHEREAS, a chronic disease, scleroderma can significantly impact the quality of life for those suffering from it, and while the cause of the disorder is unknown, researchers think that the immune system overreacts and causes inflammation and injury to the cells that line blood vessels, which trigger connective tissue cells to make too much collagen and other proteins; and

WHEREAS, some symptoms of scleroderma include fingers or toes that turn blue or white in response to cold temperatures, stiffness and tightness of skin, fingers, hands, forearm and face, hair loss, and skin that is darker or lighter than normal, and antinuclear antibody testing is an important blood test to screen for scleroderma; and

WHEREAS, the **National Scleroderma Foundation** is dedicated to its mission that includes advancing medical research, promoting awareness of the disease, and providing support and education to people with scleroderma and their families, supporting scleroderma networks, and they strive to find a cure, and the month of June is designated as **Scleroderma Awareness Month** with a **teal** ribbon symbolizing support; and

WHEREAS, the Florida-Puerto Rico Chapter is committed to the mission and goals of the National Scleroderma Foundation, including its vision of finding a cure, promoting the advancement of care, resources, and research, and raising awareness of this disease to the community.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jane Castor, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim the month of June 2025, as

“SCLERODERMA AWARENESS MONTH”

in the city of Tampa, Florida, and encourage all citizens to increase their understanding, awareness, and compassion of this disorder and thank the efforts of health care professionals and organizations including the National Scleroderma Foundation and its Florida-Puerto Rico Chapter for their dedication to individuals with scleroderma and their families, and for their commitment to improved treatments and ultimately, to finding a cure.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 12th day of May 2025.



Jane Castor
Mayor