

RESOLUTION # 008-2021

A RESOLUTION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA DEMOCRATIC STATE COMMITTEE  
THANKING DR. KATALIN KARIKÓ & DR. DREW WEISSMAN FOR THEIR RESEARCH IN MESSENGER RNA  
TECHNOLOGY AND CREATION OF THE COVID-19 VACCINE

WHEREAS, the Democratic Party believes in the work of science and scientists to lead the way forward for our society; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Katalin Karikó of Montgomery County is considered a pioneer in the research and development of in vitro-transcribed messenger RNA (mRNA) for protein therapies; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Karikó was born in Hungary, earned a Ph.D. at the University of Szeged and worked as a postdoctoral fellow at its Biological Research Center; and

WHEREAS, In 1985, when the university's research program ran out of money, Dr. Kariko, her husband, and 2-year-old daughter, moved to Philadelphia for a job as a postdoctoral student at Temple University, despite the Hungarian government only allowing them to take \$100 out of the country; and

WHEREAS, In 1989, Dr. Kariko landed a job as a research assistant professor with Dr. Elliot Barnathan at the University of Pennsylvania, and began her research and experiments on mRNA, discovering that the molecule could be used to direct any cell to make any protein at will; and

WHEREAS, thanks to funding shortfalls and grant awards failing to come through, Dr. Kariko was left without a lab or financial support and her research was nearly shelved permanently had it not been for her fierce determination and "no quit" attitude; and

WHEREAS, along with her collaborator Dr. Drew Weissman of the University of Pennsylvania, their research was modified and improved upon, eventually leading to clinical trials of an mRNA flu vaccine, cytomegalovirus, and the Zika virus, and financial support from Moderna, Inc and BioNTech SE; and

WHEREAS, in January 2020, upon the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Kariko & Dr. Weissman's research was immediately put to work in development of a mRNA vaccine against SARS-CoV-2, leading to the first ever mRNA vaccines (from Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna) and a COVID-19 vaccine developed in record time to help end the pandemic. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Pennsylvania Democratic Party joins the American people and the International community in extending our heartfelt thanks and congratulations to Dr. Katalin Kariko and Dr. Drew Weissman for their research in messenger RNA; and

RESOLVED, that the Pennsylvania Democratic Party do hereby urge the Pennsylvania congressional delegation and President Joe Biden to award either the Congressional Gold Medal or the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Dr. Kariko and Dr. Weissman for their research and advancements that quite literally have saved the human race.

Sponsored by:



Hans van Mol, State Committee Member, Chester County