

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 112

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 20, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO

District 20 (Union)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Caputo

SYNOPSIS

Designates September of each year as “Sickle Cell Awareness Month” in New Jersey.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/24/2020)

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating September of each year as
2 “Sickle Cell Awareness Month” in New Jersey.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, Sickle cell disease is a group of disorders that cause red
5 blood cells to become hard and pointed, rather than soft and round,
6 which can lead to pain, organ damage, low blood count, and
7 anemia; and
8 **WHEREAS**, Sickle cell disease is the most common genetic disorder in
9 the United States, affecting between 90,000 and 100,000
10 Americans; and
11 **WHEREAS**, Sickle cell disease primarily affects people of African
12 descent, but is also present in populations of Mediterranean, Middle
13 Eastern, and Asian descent; and
14 **WHEREAS**, Sickle cell anemia is the most common, and often the most
15 severe, form of sickle cell disease; and
16 **WHEREAS**, The genetic trait for sickle cell disease runs in families,
17 meaning that parents can pass the trait or the disease on to their
18 children; and
19 **WHEREAS**, Sickle cell trait is not a disease, and people who have the
20 trait may not be aware of it, but if a mother and father both carry
21 sickle cell trait, each of their children will have a one in four chance
22 of inheriting sickle cell disease; and
23 **WHEREAS**, All infants born in New Jersey are screened for sickle cell
24 anemia, and in 2015, 40 babies were confirmed to have the classic
25 form of the disease, and an additional 36 babies were confirmed to
26 have a variant of the disease or carrier status; and
27 **WHEREAS**, The closest treatment to a cure that is currently available
28 for sickle cell disease is a bone marrow transplant, an intense and
29 risky medical procedure that is only used in the most severe cases
30 of sickle cell disease; and
31 **WHEREAS**, Bone marrow transplantation requires a healthy donor who
32 is a genetically matched to the recipient, which can often be
33 difficult to locate, sometimes delaying the possibility of a cure for
34 some individuals with sickle cell disease; and
35 **WHEREAS**, Individuals with sickle cell disease often depend on costly
36 medications and blood transfusions to manage their symptoms; and
37 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey has enacted legislation in 2011 to require
38 health insurance to cover treatment for sickle cell anemia and
39 require the Department of Health to publish information for the
40 public to learn about sickle cell anemia, which is now available on
41 the department’s website and at health care facilities and social
42 services agencies throughout the State; and
43 **WHEREAS**, The United States federal government first officially
44 recognized September as Sickle Cell Awareness Month in 1983,
45 and continues to raise public awareness of the disease in September
46 of each year; and

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