

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 114

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 24, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY

District 7 (Burlington)

SYNOPSIS

Permanently designates first Friday in February as “Give Kids a Smile Day” in New Jersey.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** permanently designating the first Friday in
2 February as “Give Kids A Smile Day” in New Jersey.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, Tooth decay is the number one chronic infectious disease
5 among children in the United States., affecting 42 percent of
6 children aged 2 to 11 years old; and
7 **WHEREAS**, Tooth decay is four times more common than asthma
8 among adolescents aged 14 to 17 years; and
9 **WHEREAS**, The impact of untreated tooth decay goes far beyond oral
10 health. Children with untreated decay and associated toothaches
11 have more school absences, cannot pay attention in school or keep
12 up with their peers academically, and have lower standardized test
13 scores; and
14 **WHEREAS**, In 2002, Doctors. Jeff Dalin and B. Ray Storm held the
15 first Give Kids A Smile® (GKAS) event in a dental clinic in St.
16 Louis, Missouri. At that event, nearly 400 children received free
17 dental care; and
18 **WHEREAS**, The American Dental Association recognized that this
19 grassroots effort had the potential to raise national awareness about
20 the importance of oral health to overall health and the staggering
21 need that exists among millions of children who go without dental
22 care; and
23 **WHEREAS**, In 2003, GKAS evolved into a nationwide program and
24 became the American Dental Association’s signature access to oral
25 health care program for underserved children; and
26 **WHEREAS**, As a result of the program, thousands of dentists and
27 volunteers provide free oral health education, screenings, and
28 treatment to children who often do not receive the appropriate
29 dental care; and
30 **WHEREAS**, The objectives of GKAS are to: provide oral health
31 education to underserved children and their families throughout the
32 country; provide care and find dental homes for as many
33 underserved children as possible; and raise awareness among the
34 public and policymakers that the lack of access to dental care is a
35 serious problem for many children in the United States; and
36 **WHEREAS**, In the 15 years since the first GKAS event, nearly 5.5
37 million children have been provided dental care by more than
38 500,000 volunteers including dentists, dental hygienists, dental
39 assistants dental technicians, dental students, teachers, parents,
40 school nurses, and community health professionals; and
41 **WHEREAS**, Since its inception, GKAS events have occurred in all 50
42 states, providing services from oral health education to clinical
43 treatment to underserved children and their families; and
44 **WHEREAS**, Every year, for the past 14 years, Rowan College at
45 Burlington County’s dental hygiene program hosts a GKAS event
46 for children 12 years of age and younger; and

1 **WHEREAS**, The event has helped more than 2,000 children receive free
2 preventive and emergency dental care, including cleanings, fillings,
3 x-rays, and teeth extractions; and

4 **WHEREAS**, The GKAS program is an opportunity to educate families
5 on the importance of oral health care, improve the health of
6 communities by connecting underserved children and their families
7 with dentists, and raise public awareness about the lack of access to
8 dental care in this country and the need to provide oral health care
9 to children in underserved communities; now, therefore,

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11 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
12 *State of New Jersey:*

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14 1. The first Friday in February shall be permanently designated
15 as “Give Kids A Smile Day” in the State of New Jersey in order to
16 educate families on the importance of oral health care, improve the
17 health of communities by connecting underserved children and their
18 families with dentists, and raise public awareness about the lack of
19 access to dental care in this country and the need to provide oral
20 health care to children in underserved communities.

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22 2. The Governor is respectively requested to annually issue a
23 proclamation recognizing the first Friday in February as “Give Kids
24 A Smile Day” and calling upon public officials and the citizens of
25 this State to observe the month with appropriate activities and
26 programs.

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28 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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33 This joint resolution permanently designates the first Friday in
34 February as “Give Kids A Smile Day” in New Jersey in order to
35 educate families on the importance of oral health care, improve the
36 health of communities by connecting underserved children and their
37 families with dentists, and raise public awareness about the lack of
38 access to dental care in this country and the need to provide oral
39 health care to children in underserved communities.