ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION
No. 128

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 25, 2020

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman STERLEY S. STANLEY
District 18 (Middlesex)
Assemblyman DANIEL R. BENSON
District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Designates November each year as “Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/27/2021)

A JOINT RESOLUTION designating the month of November of each year as "Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month" in New Jersey.

WHEREAS, Hospice and palliative care, considered the model for quality care for people facing life-limiting illnesses, is a patient-centered, cost-effective philosophy of care that utilizes an interdisciplinary team of professionals and trained volunteers, including physicians, nurses, social workers, therapists, counselors, health aides, family caregivers, and spiritual care providers to deliver compassionate and expert medical care, pain management, caregiver training, emotional assistance, and spiritual support expressly tailored to the patient's needs and wishes; and

WHEREAS, Every year throughout the country, 1.6 million people living with a terminal diagnosis receive hospice and palliative care; and

WHEREAS, More than 430,000 trained volunteers contribute 19 million hours of service to hospice and palliative care programs annually; and

WHEREAS, At the center of hospice and palliative care is the belief that each of us has the right to die pain-free and with dignity, and that our families will receive the necessary support to allow us to do so; and

WHEREAS, Patients receive hospice and palliative care in their place of residence, nursing homes, residential or hospice inpatient facilities, and acute care hospitals. The location of care may change depending on the nature of the patient's disease progression, medical needs, or the plan of care established between the patient and the hospice program; and

WHEREAS, Studies have shown that hospice and palliative care reduces Medicare program expenditures during the last year of life by an average of $2,309 per hospice patient, and improves the quality of care received by Medicare beneficiaries; and

WHEREAS, For many years, hospice and palliative care professionals have known through firsthand experience that the interdisciplinary care they provide to patients and family caregivers coping with life-limiting illness significantly improves quality of life and allows people to focus on living as fully as possible even as life draws to a close; and

WHEREAS, It is important to continue to raise public awareness about hospice and palliative care and to encourage the citizens of the State to increase their understanding of supportive, high-quality, end-of-life care before they or members of their families are confronted with a health care crisis or terminal diagnosis; now, therefore,

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

1. The month of November of each year is designated as "Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month" in New Jersey to raise public awareness about hospice and palliative care and to encourage the citizens of the State to increase their understanding of supportive, high-quality, end-of-life care before they or members of their families are confronted with a health care crisis or terminal diagnosis.

2. The Governor is respectfully requested to issue a proclamation on November 1 of each year designating November as "Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month" in New Jersey, and calling upon public officials and the residents of this State to observe the month with appropriate activities and programs.

3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This joint resolution designates the month of November of each year as "Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month" in New Jersey to raise public awareness about hospice and palliative care and to encourage the citizens of the State to increase their understanding of supportive, high-quality, end-of-life care before they or members of their families are confronted with a health care crisis or terminal diagnosis.

Every year throughout the United States, 1.6 million people living with a terminal diagnosis receive hospice and palliative care, but more can be done to educate members of the public about the benefits of such care. At the center of hospice and palliative care is the belief every person has the right to die pain-free and with dignity. The role of hospice and palliative care workers and volunteers is to provide improved quality of life to patients and caregivers coping with life-limiting illness, and to allow an individual to focus on living as fully as possible even as life draws to a close.

The joint resolution requests that the Governor issue an annual proclamation calling upon public officials and the residents of this State to observe "Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month" with appropriate activities and programs.