

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 13

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman JOHN CATALANO

District 10 (Ocean)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Holley and Assemblywoman McKnight

SYNOPSIS

Designates the second week of October of each year as “Obesity Care Week” in NJ.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating the second week of October of
2 each year as “Obesity Care Week” in New Jersey.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, The disease of obesity is a major public health concern as
5 40 percent of adults in the United States are affected by obesity,
6 with the number of people with severe obesity in the United States
7 continuing to grow; and
8 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey’s adult obesity rate is 27.4 percent, up from 17
9 percent in 2000 and 12.3 percent in 1995, according to “The State
10 of Obesity: Better Policies for a Healthier America” study released
11 in August 2017; and
12 **WHEREAS**, Experts and researchers agree that obesity is a complex
13 disease influenced by various physiological, environmental, and
14 genetic factors. Those affected by the disease are at higher risk of
15 developing many other health-related conditions such as type 2
16 diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, stroke, and
17 some cancers; and
18 **WHEREAS**, While prevention programs have successfully established
19 the seriousness of the public health crisis posed by obesity, it is also
20 imperative that individuals and families currently affected by the
21 disease receive comprehensive care and treatment; and
22 **WHEREAS**, Studies show that bias against and stigma associated with
23 people affected by obesity among general society and healthcare
24 professionals are significant barriers to effectively treating the
25 disease; and
26 **WHEREAS**, Healthcare professionals, policymakers, patients, and
27 families should regard obesity with the same level of seriousness
28 with which other chronic diseases are regarded; and
29 **WHEREAS**, Research suggests that weight loss of as little as five to ten
30 percent of the total weight of an individual affected by obesity can
31 improve the associated health risks affecting many patients living
32 with obesity and can thereby support the goals of federal and State
33 initiatives to reduce chronic disease, improve health outcomes, and
34 help control healthcare costs; and
35 **WHEREAS**, Healthcare professionals should treat patients with respect
36 and compassion, and should partner with patients to develop
37 comprehensive and individualized approaches to weight loss and
38 weight management that consider all appropriate treatment options,
39 such as reduced-calorie diets, physical activity modifications,
40 pharmacotherapy, and bariatric surgery; and
41 **WHEREAS**, It will take a long-term collaborative effort, which will
42 involve individual, corporate, and institutional partners in all fields
43 taking active roles, to ignite the betterment of obesity care and
44 treatment; and
45 **WHEREAS**, If the prevalence of obesity continues to increase at the
46 current pace, nearly 50 percent of New Jersey adults are projected
47 to be obese in 2030; now, therefore,

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

3
4 1. The second week of October of each year is designated as
5 “Obesity Care Week” in New Jersey to create awareness of the
6 increasing prevalence of obesity, the devastating effects of obesity
7 on people’s lives, and to encourage greater action to help decrease
8 the obesity rate in New Jersey and in the nation.

9
10 2. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a
11 proclamation recognizing the second week of October of each year
12 as “Obesity Care Week” in New Jersey, and call upon public
13 officials and the citizens of this State to observe the day with
14 appropriate activities and programs.

15
16 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

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19 STATEMENT

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21 This joint resolution designates the second week of October of
22 each year as “Obesity Care Week” in New Jersey to create
23 awareness of the increasing prevalence of obesity in American
24 society and the devastating effects of obesity on people’s lives, and
25 to encourage healthy living habits which would help to decrease the
26 obesity rate in New Jersey and in the nation.

27 Obesity is a complex disorder involving an excessive amount of
28 body fat that affects 40 percent of adults in the United States and
29 27.4 percent of adults in New Jersey. Experts and researchers agree
30 that obesity is a complex disease influenced by various
31 physiological, environmental, and genetic factors. Those affected
32 by the disease are at higher risk of developing health-related
33 conditions such as type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure,
34 cardiovascular disease, stroke, and some cancers.

35 While obesity has been successfully established as a serious
36 public health crisis today, it is imperative that individuals and
37 families currently affected by obesity receive comprehensive care
38 and treatment, without being subjected to the bias or stigma that is
39 so often associated with people affected by the disease.
40 Accordingly, healthcare professionals, policymakers, patients, and
41 families should regard obesity with the same level of seriousness
42 with which other chronic diseases are regarded. Healthcare
43 professionals in particular should seek to partner with patients
44 affected by obesity to develop comprehensive, individualized
45 approaches to weight loss and weight management that consider all
46 appropriate treatment options. A long-term collaborative effort
47 involving individuals, businesses, and institutional partners in all
48 fields, would support the betterment of obesity care and treatment.

1 Weight loss of as little as five to ten percent of the total weight of
2 an individual affected by obesity can improve the associated health
3 risks affecting many patients living with obesity. Promoting better,
4 more compassionate obesity care and treatment will not only
5 improve individuals' health, but will also help the federal and State
6 governments meet public health and economic goals.

WITHDRAWN