ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION
No. 15

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Assemblywoman ANGELICA M. JIMENEZ
District 32 (Bergen and Hudson)
Assemblyman DANIEL R. BENSON
District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:
Assemblywoman Sumter, Assemblymen Conaway, DiMaio and Coughlin

SYNOPSIS

Designates second full week in September as "Marrow Donation Awareness Week."

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.

A JOINT RESOLUTION designating the second full week in September of each year as "Marrow Donation Awareness Week" in New Jersey.

WHEREAS, There are thousands of persons across the United States with blood cancers such as leukemia and lymphoma, as well as sickle cell disease and other diseases, who could benefit from receiving a life-saving bone marrow or peripheral blood stem cell (PBSC) transplant; and

WHEREAS, The National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) operates the "Be the Match Registry," and the first step to becoming a donor is to join this registry; and

WHEREAS, Registering with the NMDP is easy to do; all that is required is to complete the online form and order a registration kit, follow the instructions in the kit to collect a swab of cheek cells, and return the kit to the NMDP; a potential donor who matches a patient is asked to make either a bone marrow or PBSC donation; and

WHEREAS, Bone marrow donation is a surgical outpatient procedure that takes place at a hospital; the donor receives anesthesia and feels no pain, and the donated liquid marrow replaces itself completely within four to six weeks; and

WHEREAS, PBSC donation is a nonsurgical procedure that takes place at a blood center or outpatient hospital unit and involves a transplant of cells from circulating blood; the donor is given injections of a drug called filgrastim, over a five-day period leading up to donation, to increase the number of blood-forming cells in the bloodstream; blood is then removed through a needle in one arm and passed through a machine that separates out the blood-forming cells, with the remaining blood returned to the donor through the other arm; and the donor's blood-forming cells return to their normal levels within four to six weeks; and

WHEREAS, All medical costs for the donation procedure are covered by the NMDP or the donor's health insurance, as are travel expenses and other non-medical costs; the only costs to the donor might be time taken off from work; and

WHEREAS, Racial and ethnic heritage are very important factors in matching patients with bone marrow or PBSC donors, and there are not enough registry members of diverse racial and ethnic heritage; donors are especially needed from such backgrounds as: Black or African American; American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian, including South Asian; Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; Hispanic or Latino; and multiple race; and

WHEREAS, This Legislature has already taken legislative action to recognize the importance of bone marrow and PBSC donation through the enactment of P.L.2010, c.61 (C.26:2H-12.59); and

WHEREAS, P.L.2010, c.61 requires the Department of Health to provide, on its Internet website, information, derived from the

NMDP, which is designed to inform patients of the option to become a bone marrow or PBSC donor by registering with the NMDP, and to answer common questions about donation; and

WHEREAS, P.L.2010, c.61 also requires the Commissioner of Health, within the limits of resources available to the Department of Health for this purpose, to seek to promote awareness among physicians and the general public in this State about the option to become a bone marrow or PBSC donor; and

WHEREAS, P.L.2010, c.61 further stipulates that the Commissioner of Health is to consult with at least the following in the effort to promote awareness about the option to become a bone marrow or PBSC donor: the Medical Society of New Jersey, the Institute of Medicine and Public Health of New Jersey, the NMDP, and other organizations that are seeking to increase bone marrow and PBSC donation among various ethnic groups within the State in need of these donations; and

WHEREAS, The month of September in each year is designated as "Leukemia, Lymphoma, and Myeloma Awareness Month" in New Jersey pursuant to P.L.2008, J.R.4 (C.36:2-115 et seq.), and bone marrow or PBSC donation is a critical means of successfully treating these life-threatening blood cancers, as well as sickle cell disease and other diseases; and

WHEREAS, It is appropriate to permanently designate a week in September of each year, to coincide with the annual observance of "Leukemia, Lymphoma, and Myeloma Awareness Month," in order to raise awareness in this State of the importance of bone marrow and PBSC donation in treating these and other diseases; now, therefore,

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

1. The second full week in September of each year is designated as “Marrow Donation Awareness Week” in New Jersey to increase public awareness of the importance of bone marrow and peripheral blood stem cell donation in treating life-threatening blood cancers such as leukemia and lymphoma, sickle cell disease, and other diseases.

2. The Governor shall issue a proclamation recognizing the second full week in September of each year as “Marrow Donation Awareness Week” and calling upon public officials and the citizens of this State to observe the week with appropriate activities and programs.

3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This joint resolution designates the second full week in September of each year as "Marrow Donation Awareness Week" in New Jersey to increase public awareness of the importance of bone marrow and peripheral blood stem cell donation in treating life-threatening blood cancers such as leukemia and lymphoma, sickle cell disease, and other diseases.

The joint resolution directs the Governor to issue a proclamation recognizing the second full week in September of each year as "Marrow Donation Awareness Week" and calling upon public officials and the citizens of this State to observe the week with appropriate activities and programs.