

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 178

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JULY 16, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblyman RONALD S. DANCER

District 12 (Burlington, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean)

Assemblyman DANIEL R. BENSON

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:

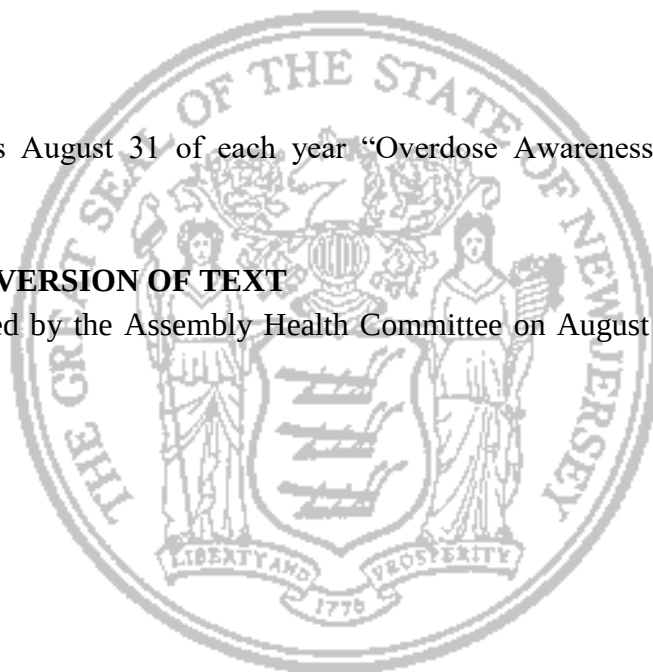
**Assemblymen Armato, Rooney, Assemblywomen Vainieri Huttie, Dunn,
Assemblyman Conaway, Assemblywomen DiMaso, Pinkin, Assemblymen
Wirths, Space, Tully, Assemblywoman Swain and Assemblyman
Chiaravalloti**

SYNOPSIS

Designates August 31 of each year “Overdose Awareness Day” in New Jersey.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Assembly Health Committee on August 24, 2020, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 8/27/2020)

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION designating August 31 of each year as
2 “Overdose Awareness Day” in New Jersey.

3
4 WHEREAS, ¹ **【Drug addiction】** Substance use disorder¹ is a chronic
5 disease ¹ **【,**¹ characterized by ¹ the problematic,¹ compulsive ¹ **【,**¹
6 or ¹ **【difficult to control drug】** difficult-to-control¹ use ¹ of drugs
7 and other substances,¹ despite harmful consequences; and

8 WHEREAS, ¹ **【Drug addiction】** Substance use disorder, particularly
9 when it involves opioid drugs,¹ is seen by both the ¹ federal¹
10 Centers for Disease Control ¹ and Prevention¹ and the World
11 Health Organization as a fast-growing epidemic that can all too
12 easily lead to overdose and death; and

13 WHEREAS, In 2018, 67,367 individuals died from drug overdoses in
14 the United States; and

15 WHEREAS, In New Jersey alone, 2,900 people died from drug
16 overdoses in 2018; and

17 WHEREAS, Furthermore, for every drug overdose that results in
18 death, there are many more nonfatal overdoses, each taking an
19 emotional and economic toll on ¹ **【the individual】** individuals¹ ,
20 their ¹ **【family】** families¹ , and the community at large; and

21 WHEREAS, ¹ **【Drug addiction】** A substance use disorder¹ can fuel
22 feelings of shame, guilt, embarrassment, depression, and
23 hopelessness, causing individuals to resist seeking treatment and
24 support; and

25 WHEREAS, Overdose Awareness Day is a global event held on
26 August 31 of each year that aims to raise awareness of drug
27 overdoses, reduce the stigma of a drug-related death, and ¹ **【to】**¹
28 acknowledge the grief felt by families and friends remembering
29 those who ¹ **【have died or had a permanent injury】** died or were
30 permanently injured¹ as a result of a drug overdose; and

31 ¹ **【WHEREAS, To further the goals of Overdose Awareness Day, all**
32 **flags throughout the State should be flown at half-staff for the**
33 **day’s duration; and】**¹

34 WHEREAS, Recognizing Overdose Awareness Day in New Jersey
35 sends a strong message to former ¹ **【or】** and¹ current substance
36 users, namely, that they are valued, and that overdose death is
37 preventable; now, therefore,

38
39 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
40 *State of New Jersey:*

41
42 1. August 31 of each year shall be designated as “Overdose
43 Awareness Day” in New Jersey to raise awareness of overdose and
44 reduce the stigma of a drug-related death.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **【thus】** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly AHE committee amendments adopted August 24, 2020.

- 1 2. The Governor is respectfully requested to ¹order flags be
2 flown at half-staff ¹observe a moment of silence on August 31 of
3 each year¹ and to annually¹ issue a proclamation calling upon
4 public officials and the citizens of this State to observe “Overdose
5 Awareness Day” with appropriate activities and programs ¹each
6 year¹.
7
- 8 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.