

ASSEMBLY HEALTH COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION No. 178

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: AUGUST 24, 2020

The Assembly Health Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Joint Resolution No. 178.

As amended, this resolution designates August 31 of each year as “Overdose Awareness Day” in New Jersey, and respectfully requests that the Governor annually observe a moment of silence and issue a proclamation calling upon public officials and the citizens of New Jersey to observe the day with appropriate activities and programs.

Substance use disorders, particularly those involving opioid drugs, have resulted in an epidemic of fatal and non-fatal overdoses throughout the State, nation, and world. Individuals with a substance use disorder may experience feelings of shame, guilt, embarrassment, depression, and hopelessness, making them reluctant to seek out treatment and support. Overdose Awareness Day is a global annual event that seeks to raise awareness of drug overdoses, reduce the stigma of a drug-related death, and acknowledge the grief felt by families and friends remembering those who died or were permanently injured as a result of a drug overdose.

As reported by the committee, Assembly Joint Resolution No. 178 is identical to Senate Joint Resolution No. 85 (1R) which was reported by the committee on this date.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments revise the resolution to replace the term “drug addiction” with “substance use disorder,” update a reference to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and make various changes involving grammar and syntax. The amendments request that the Governor observe a moment of silence instead of ordering flags to be flown at half-staff.