

## JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 2

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

**WHEREAS**, Substance use disorder is a chronic disease characterized by the problematic, compulsive, or difficult-to-control use of drugs and other substances, despite harmful consequences; and

**WHEREAS**, Substance use disorder, particularly when it involves opioid drugs, is seen by both the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization as a fast-growing epidemic that can all too easily lead to overdose and death; and

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

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

**WHEREAS**, Furthermore, for every drug overdose that results in death, there are many more nonfatal overdoses, each taking an emotional and economic toll on individuals, their families, and the community at large; and

**WHEREAS**, A substance use disorder can fuel feelings of shame, guilt, embarrassment, depression, and hopelessness, causing individuals to resist seeking treatment and support; and

**WHEREAS**, Overdose Awareness Day is a global event held on August 31 of each year that aims 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; and

**WHEREAS**, Recognizing Overdose Awareness Day in New Jersey sends a strong message to former and current substance users, namely, that they are valued, and that overdose death is preventable; now, therefore,

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

C.36:2-394 “Overdose Awareness Day,” August 31; designated.

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

C.36:2-395 Annual observance.

2. The Governor is respectfully requested to observe a moment of silence on August 31 of each year and to annually issue a proclamation calling upon public officials and the citizens of this State to observe “Overdose Awareness Day” with appropriate activities and programs.

3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

Approved August 31, 2020.