SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION
No. 116

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 6, 2021

Sponsored by:
Senator VIN GOPAL
District 11 (Monmouth)

SYNOPSIS

Designates September of each year as “Dystonia Awareness Month.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

A JOINT RESOLUTION designating September of each year as "Dystonia Awareness Month" in the State of New Jersey.

WHEREAS, Dystonia is an incurable neurological disorder involving disabling, involuntary muscle spasms, the cause of which is unknown; and

WHEREAS, The disorder's muscle spasms may be focal, where only one body part, such as the neck, speech muscles, eyelids, or an arm is affected, or generalized, where the entire body is susceptible to uncontrollable spasms and contortions that often involve great pain; and

WHEREAS, Dystonia symptoms may be episodic, only occurring during periodic attacks, or they may occur constantly, making dystonia an especially difficult disability to live with; and

WHEREAS, Though several treatment options exist, such as physical therapy, oral medication, injections, and surgery, their results are not consistent and can involve substantial risks, particularly in brain surgeries undertaken to address the most severe cases; and

WHEREAS, Even though dystonia may affect as many as 750,000 people in the United States, one-third of whom are children, public knowledge of the disorder is very limited; and

WHEREAS, Many people react to the physical manifestations of dystonia by avoiding those affected with the disorder, often causing isolation and deep psychological distress for persons who suffer from dystonia; and

WHEREAS, To address these problems, persons who suffer from the disorder, along with their families and friends, have formed the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation, and the Central Jersey Dystonia Support and Action Group to help generate public understanding and support each other, and to seek the causes of and improved treatments and a cure for dystonia; and

WHEREAS, Greater understanding of dystonia both in the medical and lay communities would substantially benefit those affected, and increased support is needed for efforts to find the causes of and improved treatments and a cure for dystonia; now, therefore,

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

1. The month of September in each year is designated as "Dystonia Awareness Month" in the State of New Jersey in recognition of the plight of those suffering from the disorder's painful and debilitating effects, in order to foster public understanding, to develop support for finding the causes of and improved treatments and a cure for the disorder, and to encourage all citizens to aid and support those who are affected.

2. The Governor shall annually issue a proclamation calling upon public officials and the citizens of this State to observe "Dystonia Awareness Month" with appropriate activities and programs.

3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This joint resolution designates September of each year as "Dystonia Awareness Month" in the State of New Jersey.

Dystonia is an incurable neurological disorder causing disabling and often very painful muscle spasms. As many as 750,000 people in the United States may suffer from dystonia, yet public awareness of the disease is low. This resolution will serve to foster public awareness of the plight of those suffering from the disorder, and aid efforts to identify the causes of, and improved treatments for, dystonia. This resolution requests the Governor to urge public officials and citizens to observe "Dystonia Awareness Month" with appropriate activities and programs.