

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 18

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Senator FRED H. MADDEN, JR.

District 4 (Camden and Gloucester)

SYNOPSIS

Designates November of each year as “Caregivers Awareness Month.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating November of each year as
2 “Caregivers Awareness Month.”
3
4 **WHEREAS**, An estimated 65.7 million people in the United States, 29
5 percent of the country’s population, serve as unpaid family
6 caregivers each year, and on average, provide 20.4 hours per week
7 of care; and
8 **WHEREAS**, About seven in ten caregivers take care of another
9 individual 50 years of age or older, approximately 14 percent of
10 caregivers take care of an adult from 18 years of age to 49 years of
11 age, and approximately 14 percent of caregivers care for a special
12 needs child; and
13 **WHEREAS**, Nearly one-third of all caregivers find their duties to be a
14 high burden and consider their circumstances to be emotionally
15 stressful; and
16 **WHEREAS**, Seventeen percent of caregivers report that their health has
17 deteriorated as a result of their caregiving duties, and the longer a
18 caregiver has been providing care, the more likely the caregiver is
19 to report health issues; and
20 **WHEREAS**, Caregivers who have been providing care for five or more
21 years are nearly twice as likely as shorter-term caregivers to report
22 a decline in their health; and
23 **WHEREAS**, Approximately 73 percent of caregivers were employed at
24 some point while providing care, and among those working, two-
25 thirds of caregivers have gone in late, left early or taken time off
26 during the work day to address caregiving issues; and
27 **WHEREAS**, Most caregivers have not obtained formal training and
28 approximately 78 percent of caregivers feel they need more help or
29 information with respect to caregiving issues; and
30 **WHEREAS**, Almost half of all caregivers perform complex
31 medical/nursing tasks for the individuals in their care, and more
32 than 15 million caregivers are providing care to loved ones with
33 Alzheimer’s disease; and
34 **WHEREAS**, Due to the increase in cases of many childhood
35 conditions, increased numbers of parents are caring for children
36 with special needs; and
37 **WHEREAS**, Approximately 11 percent of caregivers have served in the
38 armed forces and approximately 17 percent of all individuals
39 receiving care have served in the armed forces, many with
40 traumatic brain injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder; and
41 **WHEREAS**, The value of the services provided by family caregivers
42 each year is approximately \$450 billion, twice as much as homecare
43 and nursing home services combined; and
44 **WHEREAS**, On November 1, 2012, the President of the United States
45 declared November 2012 as “National Family Caregivers Month,”
46 recognizing the “immeasurable impact” of caregivers on the lives
47 of the individuals in their care; and

SJR18 MADDEN

3

1 **WHEREAS**, It is altogether fitting and proper, and in the public
2 interest, for the State of New Jersey to designate November of each
3 year as “Caregivers Awareness Month”; now, therefore,

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

1. November of each year is designated as “Caregivers Awareness Month” to honor caregivers and raise awareness as to the many challenges they face.

12 2. The Governor is requested to annually issue a proclamation
13 and call upon public officials, and all citizens of this State, to
14 observe “Caregivers Awareness Month” with appropriate programs
15 and events.

17 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

21 This resolution designates November of each year as “Caregivers
22 Awareness Month” and recognizes the 65 million voluntary family
23 caregivers in the United States.

Caregiving is not a “one size fits all” obligation, and caregivers find themselves caring for individuals of all ages and various needs. Conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease and dementia are commonly the basis for caregiving for the elderly, with five million individuals in the U.S. suffering from Alzheimer’s disease alone. Additionally, the incidence of various childhood conditions is increasing, and therefore many parents are caregivers for children with special needs. Further, many veterans of the armed forces, including those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injuries, require the assistance of caregivers.

The value of the services provided by these caretakers, which often involves complex medical or nursing tasks, is approximately \$450 billion per year. Despite providing such complex care, most caregivers have not obtained formal training. Moreover, the average amount of time spent by caregivers for their caregiving duties is 20.4 hours per week, and as the majority of caregivers are also employed, this commitment is quite considerable.

The commitment of these caregivers to their loved ones often comes at a price to the caregivers themselves. Many caregivers find their duties to be emotionally stressful and highly burdensome. Moreover, the longer an individual acts in a caregiver capacity, the more likely it is that individual will experience a deterioration of health. Moreover, more than three-quarters of all caregivers feel that they need more help or information with respect to various caregiving topics.