SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION No. 28

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 14, 2021

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably Senate Joint Resolution No. 28.

This joint resolution designates June of each year as "Scleroderma Awareness Month" and directs the Governor to annually issue a proclamation calling upon public officials, health care professionals, and the citizens of this State to observe the month with appropriate activities and programs designed to raise public awareness of this disease.

Scleroderma is a chronic connective tissue disease in which the body's soft tissues contract and harden due to an overproduction of collagen. The most visible effects of the disease are cosmetic, where it results in the hardening of the surface areas of the skin, but the disease can adversely affect internal organs as well, potentially resulting in disabling or even fatal symptoms. The disease can be difficult to diagnose, as it resembles other autoimmune disorders, and without prompt treatment, even mild cases can develop more serious symptoms.

Promoting increased awareness of the disease may lead to improved diagnoses, help support people living with the disease and their families, and promote additional research into the causes and potential treatments for scleroderma.