

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 33

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 3, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

SYNOPSIS

Designates November each year as “Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating the month of November of each
2 year as “Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month” in New
3 Jersey.
4
5 **WHEREAS**, Hospice and palliative care, considered the model for
6 quality care for people facing life-limiting illnesses, is a patient-
7 centered, cost-effective philosophy of care that utilizes an
8 interdisciplinary team of professionals and trained volunteers,
9 including physicians, nurses, social workers, therapists, counselors,
10 health aides, family caregivers, and spiritual care providers to
11 deliver compassionate and expert medical care, pain management,
12 caregiver training, emotional assistance, and spiritual support
13 expressly tailored to the patient’s needs and wishes; and
14 **WHEREAS**, Every year throughout the country, 1.6 million people
15 living with a terminal diagnosis receive hospice and palliative care;
16 and
17 **WHEREAS**, More than 430,000 trained volunteers contribute 19
18 million hours of service to hospice and palliative care programs
19 annually; and
20 **WHEREAS**, At the center of hospice and palliative care is the belief
21 that each of us has the right to die pain-free and with dignity, and
22 that our families will receive the necessary support to allow us to do
23 so; and
24 **WHEREAS**, Patients receive hospice and palliative care in their place of
25 residence, nursing homes, residential or hospice inpatient facilities,
26 and acute care hospitals. The location of care may change
27 depending on the nature of the patient’s disease progression,
28 medical needs, or the plan of care established between the patient
29 and the hospice program; and
30 **WHEREAS**, Studies have shown that hospice and palliative care
31 reduces Medicare program expenditures during the last year of life
32 by an average of \$2,309 per hospice patient, and improves the
33 quality of care received by Medicare beneficiaries; and
34 **WHEREAS**, For many years, hospice and palliative care professionals
35 have known through firsthand experience that the interdisciplinary
36 care they provide to patients and family caregivers coping with life-
37 limiting illness significantly improves quality of life and allows
38 people to focus on living as fully as possible even as life draws to a
39 close; and
40 **WHEREAS**, It is important to continue to raise public awareness
41 about hospice and palliative care and to encourage the citizens of
42 the State to increase their understanding of supportive, high-
43 quality, end-of-life care before they or members of their families
44 are confronted with a health care crisis or terminal diagnosis;
45 now, therefore,
46
47 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
48 *State of New Jersey:*

SJR33 RUIZ

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1 1. The month of November of each year is designated as
2 “Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month” in New Jersey to
3 raise public awareness about hospice and palliative care and to
4 encourage the citizens of the State to increase their understanding of
5 supportive, high-quality, end-of-life care before they or members of
6 their families are confronted with a health care crisis or terminal
7 diagnosis.

2. The Governor is respectfully requested to issue a proclamation on November 1 of each year designating November as “Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month” in New Jersey, and calling upon public officials and the residents of this State to observe the month with appropriate activities and programs.

5 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This joint resolution designates the month of November of each year as “Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month” in New Jersey to raise public awareness about hospice and palliative care and to encourage the citizens of the State to increase their understanding of supportive, high-quality, end-of-life care before they or members of their families are confronted with a health care crisis or terminal diagnosis.

Every year throughout the United States, 1.6 million people living with a terminal diagnosis receive hospice and palliative care, but more can be done to educate members of the public about the benefits of such care. At the center of hospice and palliative care is the belief every person has the right to die pain-free and with dignity. The role of hospice and palliative care workers and volunteers is to provide improved quality of life to patients and caregivers coping with life-limiting illness, and to allow an individual to focus on living as fully as possible even as life draws to a close.

37 The joint resolution requests that the Governor issue an annual
38 proclamation calling upon public officials and the residents of this
39 State to observe “Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month”
40 with appropriate activities and programs.