SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION
No. 43

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 13, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator MICHAEL L. TESTA, JR.
District 1 (Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland)
Senator VIN GOPAL
District 11 (Monmouth)

SYNOPSIS

Designates neon yellow as official color to raise awareness of suicide among veterans.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

A JOINT RESOLUTION designating neon yellow as the official color to raise awareness of suicide among veterans in New Jersey.

WHEREAS, New Jersey is grateful for the dutiful military service of the many men and women who have served honorably and with courage for their nation and this State; and

WHEREAS, The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) released a report in February 2013 detailing that an average of 22 veterans commit suicide each day; and

WHEREAS, In 2014, there were 41,425 suicides among U.S adults and, among all U.S. adult deaths from suicide, 18 percent (7,403) were identified as veterans of the U.S. military; and

WHEREAS, According to the 2016 VA National Suicide Data report, the rate of suicide was 1.8 times higher among female veterans compared with non-veteran adult women and 1.4 times higher among male veterans compared with non-veteran adult men; and

WHEREAS, The 2016 report stated veterans ages 55 to 74 had the highest incidence of suicide and almost 70 percent of veteran suicides involved a gun, compared to about 48 percent of non-veteran suicides; and

WHEREAS, The VALOR Clinic Foundation in Pennsylvania, a non-profit organization committed to providing assistance to veterans with limited or no access to care, has encouraged states to follow Pennsylvania's lead and designate Vet 22 as an awareness color for suicide among veterans; and

WHEREAS, The color Vet 22 is neon yellow (pantone 395) and derives its name from the startling statistic that 22 veterans take their own lives each day and is designed to enlist support in the fight against veteran suicide; and

WHEREAS, The Vet 22 or neon yellow color offers an easy way to send a loud message of compassion to the men and women who put their lives on the line to protect and serve the United States; and

WHEREAS, In New Jersey, as of September 30, 2018, there are approximately 340,560 veterans in this State, of which approximately 25,680 are women; and

WHEREAS, The residents of New Jersey have a responsibility to help our brother-in-arms and sisters-in-arms who suffer from the deepest, invisible wounds of war and conflict before these veterans take their own lives; and

WHEREAS, The health and well-being of the courageous men and women who served in uniform are of the highest priority for this State; and

WHEREAS, The State of New Jersey can demonstrate its support for its veterans and their emotional and mental health by designating neon yellow as the official color to raise awareness of suicide among veterans and to bring attention to support programs available to veterans suffering from various mental health disorders; now, therefore,

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

1. The color neon yellow is designated the official color in New Jersey for raising awareness of suicide by veterans of the United States Armed Forces and to bring attention to support programs available to veterans.

2. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This joint resolution designates neon yellow (pantone 395) as the official color in New Jersey for raising awareness of veteran suicide. The neon yellow color would be called Vet 22 in New Jersey as it is called in Pennsylvania. The color Vet 22 derives its name from the startling statistic that 22 veterans take their own lives each day and is designed to enlist support in the fight against veteran suicide.

In New Jersey, as of September 30, 2018, there are approximately 340,560 veterans in this State, of which approximately 25,680 are women. The residents of New Jersey have a responsibility to be proactive and help our veterans who suffer from the deepest, invisible wounds of war and conflict before these veterans take their own lives. The health and well-being of the courageous men and women who served in uniform are of the highest priority for this State.

It is therefore proper and fitting for the State of New Jersey to illustrate its support for its veterans and their emotional and mental health by designating Vet 22 or neon yellow as the official color to raise awareness of veteran suicide.