

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 61

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 5, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator CHRISTOPHER "KIP" BATEMAN

District 16 (Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset)

SYNOPSIS

Designates fourth week in April of each year as “Every Kid Healthy Week.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating the fourth week in April of each
2 year as “Every Kid Healthy Week” in New Jersey.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey’s future depends on the health and vitality
5 of its children, however, childhood health issues, such as obesity,
6 food insecurity, and physical inactivity, threaten to limit this
7 State’s bright future; and
8 **WHEREAS**, For example, only 27 percent of New Jersey’s children
9 meet the recommended weekly level of physical activity, while
10 over a third do not eat fruits and vegetables on a daily basis; and
11 **WHEREAS**, Consequently, roughly 94,000 children in New Jersey
12 between the ages of 10 and 17 are considered obese, and an
13 estimated 82,000 high school students in this State are
14 considered overweight; and
15 **WHEREAS**, This childhood health crisis not only harms the physical
16 and mental development of New Jersey’s children, but also
17 causes increasing obesity-related healthcare costs to be placed on
18 this State’s taxpayers; and
19 **WHEREAS**, Children who are considered obese or overweight are
20 dramatically more likely to suffer from obesity as adults; and
21 **WHEREAS**, Obesity in adults is highly correlated with physical
22 health issues, such as cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes,
23 asthma, arthritis, hypertension, stroke, and various forms of
24 cancer, as well as mental health issues, such as depression,
25 anxiety, and chronic low self-esteem; and
26 **WHEREAS**, These physical and mental illnesses, which are shown to
27 negatively impact social relationships and work performance,
28 directly undercut the ability of every child in New Jersey to
29 achieve their life-long dreams and ambitions; and
30 **WHEREAS**, Society also pays a high price for this obesity epidemic
31 as public funds are increasingly used to cover rising obesity-
32 related healthcare costs; and
33 **WHEREAS**, Obese adults spent over 40 percent more on healthcare
34 compared to healthy adults and place a disproportionate cost
35 burden on Medicaid and Medicare, which together cover over
36 half of the obesity-related medical spending in the nation; and
37 **WHEREAS**, According to the New Jersey Department of Health, “if
38 the prevalence of obesity continues to rise, New Jersey’s obesity-
39 related health care spending could quadruple to \$9.3 billion by
40 2018”; and
41 **WHEREAS**, Responding to this national crisis, “Every Kid Healthy
42 Week” was launched as a part of the national movement to
43 combat childhood obesity, promote healthy lifestyle choices for
44 today’s children, and celebrate school wellness achievements;
45 and
46 **WHEREAS**, This movement supports schools, parents, and health
47 clubs to “implement wellness initiatives that promote and
48 reinforce healthy eating, physical activity, nutrition education

1 and physical education in order to increase student
 2 achievement”; and
 3 **WHEREAS**, By promoting lifestyle choices that are both healthy and
 4 practical, “Every Kid Health Week” not only brings attention to
 5 the obesity epidemic, but, more importantly, provides at-risk
 6 children with a pathway towards healthy living and life-long
 7 achievement; and
 8 **WHEREAS**, It is altogether fitting and proper for New Jersey to
 9 annually observe “Every Kid Healthy Week,” so as to maximize
 10 the potential of every child in New Jersey and ensure the vitality
 11 of this great State in the decades to come; now, therefore,

12
 13 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
 14 *State of New Jersey:*

15
 16 1. The fourth week in April of each year is designated as
 17 “Every Kid Healthy Week” in the State of New Jersey to promote
 18 healthy lifestyle choices for the State’s youth and draw attention to
 19 the risks of childhood obesity.

20
 21 2. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a
 22 proclamation designating the fourth week in April as “Every Kid
 23 Healthy Week” and shall call upon the public officials and citizens
 24 of this State to observe the week with appropriate activities and
 25 programs.

26
 27 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.
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 29

30 STATEMENT

31
 32 This joint resolution designates the fourth week in April of each
 33 year as “Every Kid Healthy Week” in New Jersey in order to
 34 promote healthy lifestyles choices for New Jersey’s children and
 35 draw attention to the risks of childhood obesity.

36 New Jersey is no exception to the nation-wide obesity crisis.
 37 Roughly 94,000 New Jersey children between the ages of 10 and 17
 38 are considered obese, and an estimated 82,000 high school students
 39 in the State are considered overweight. Each of these children are
 40 at risk for developing a wide variety of physical and mental
 41 illnesses, such as heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, and depression, all
 42 of which limit their ability to achieve life-long dreams and
 43 ambitions. Moreover, the increased healthcare costs associated
 44 with obesity are directly thrust upon New Jersey’s taxpayers,
 45 typically in the form of Medicaid and Medicare contributions.

46 In response, “Every Kid Healthy Week” was established as a part
 47 of a national movement to help schools and parents promote healthy
 48 lifestyle choices for their children. During this week, schools are

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1 encouraged to partner with parents and health clubs to help
2 encourage kids to eat healthy and stay active. By inspiring today's
3 youth to live healthy, "Every Kid Healthy Week" will benefit every
4 child and taxpayer in New Jersey.