

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 64

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.

District 21 (Morris, Somerset and Union)

SYNOPSIS

Permanently designates last week in February as “Eating Disorders Awareness Week” in New Jersey.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** permanently designating the last week in
2 February as “Eating Disorders Awareness Week in New Jersey.”
3
4 **WHEREAS**, Eating disorders are serious mental illnesses that affect
5 people of every age, sex, gender, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic
6 group; and
7 **WHEREAS**, Eating disorders involve serious disturbances in eating
8 behavior, such as extreme and unhealthy reduction of food intake,
9 severe overeating, or feelings of distress or extreme concern about
10 body shape or weight; and
11 **WHEREAS**, The four most common eating disorders are anorexia
12 nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder, and other specified
13 feeding or eating disorder; and
14 **WHEREAS**, Contrary to popular belief, eating disorders are not based
15 on food. There are several contributing factors that can lead to the
16 emergence of an eating disorder, although no defined cause can be
17 found; and
18 **WHEREAS**, Growing consensus suggests that a range of biological
19 (genetics), psychological (co-occurrence with depression, anxiety,
20 and other mental health disorders), interpersonal (history of abuse
21 or personal trauma), and social (constant influx of images of beauty
22 and the “perfect” body) factors can lead to an eating disorder; and
23 **WHEREAS**, Many eating disorders begin during adolescence, but
24 psychologists and doctors have diagnosed an increasing number of
25 younger children and older adults with these illnesses; and
26 **WHEREAS**, Once an eating disorder has developed, it becomes a self-
27 sustaining process that usually requires professional help and
28 support to recover; and
29 **WHEREAS**, Eating disorders affect approximately 25 million
30 Americans, 25 percent of whom are male; and
31 **WHEREAS**, Eating disorders are common, may be difficult to detect,
32 and in severe cases, can lead to death. Studies have shown that:
33 anorexia has the highest mortality rate among all psychological
34 disorders; 64 percent of those who suffer from bulimia are a near
35 normal weight; binge eating disorder is the most common eating
36 disorder in the United States; and two-thirds of individuals with
37 anorexia also showed signs of a co-occurring anxiety disorder; and
38 **WHEREAS**, The warning signs of eating disorders include, but are not
39 limited to, a preoccupation with weight loss, dieting, and food
40 control; severe fluctuations in weight; evidence of purging
41 behaviors or binge eating; non-specific complaints of constipation,
42 acid reflux, and abdominal pain; dental problems; muscle
43 weakness; lethargy; and impaired immune functioning; and
44 **WHEREAS**, Eating disorders affect every organ system in the body.
45 Purging by vomiting or laxative leads to electrolyte imbalances that
46 affect the cardiovascular system; binge eating and food restriction
47 cause disturbances in the gastrointestinal system; and fasting and
48 starvation deprive the brain of essential energy; and

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

42 4. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

47 This resolution permanently designates the last week in February
48 as “Eating Disorders Awareness Week” in New Jersey in order to

1 raise public awareness about eating disorders and the work the
2 National Eating Disorders Association does in providing services
3 to, and advocating for early intervention and improved access to
4 treatment for, individuals with eating disorders and encourage those
5 suffering from eating disorders and their families to seek the
6 support they need to overcome these life-threatening illnesses.