

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 70

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator JOSEPH F. VITALE

District 19 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Designates March 6 of each year as “Black Balloon Day” in NJ.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



SJR70 VITALE

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1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating March 6 of each year as “Black
2 Balloon Day” in New Jersey.
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4 **WHEREAS**, Drug overdose is the leading cause of accidental death in
5 the United States; and
6 **WHEREAS**, In 2016, there were 63,600 lethal drug overdoses, two-
7 thirds of which involved opioids; and
8 **WHEREAS**, The number of opioid-related overdose deaths in 2016 was
9 five times higher than in 1999, coinciding with a nearly 300 percent
10 increase in the sale of opioid pain medications during that time; and
11 **WHEREAS**, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report
12 that, in 2016, approximately 11.5 million people in the United
13 States misused prescription opioids; and
14 **WHEREAS**, In 2015, 2 million people in the United States had a
15 substance use disorder involving prescription pain relievers and
16 591,000 had a substance use disorder involving heroin; and
17 **WHEREAS**, The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services
18 Administration reports that many people who become addicted to
19 opioids go on to abuse heroin; and
20 **WHEREAS**, Nearly 80 percent of heroin users reported using
21 prescription opioids prior to heroin; and
22 **WHEREAS**, There was more than a fivefold increase in the heroin
23 death rate from 2002 to 2014; and
24 **WHEREAS**, In 2016, there were 2,221 drug overdose deaths in New
25 Jersey; and
26 **WHEREAS**, In 2016, according to the National Institute on Drug
27 Abuse, New Jersey’s opioid-related overdose death rate of 16
28 deaths per 100,000 persons was higher than the national rate; and
29 **WHEREAS**, In 2015, illicit and prescription drug overdoses in New
30 Jersey claimed more lives than homicides, firearm deaths, motor
31 vehicle crashes, and suicides; and
32 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey’s per capita rate of 8.3 heroin-related deaths
33 per 100,000 is more than triple the national rate; and
34 **WHEREAS**, “Black Balloon Day” is dedicated to remembering not only
35 those lost to drug addiction but also the friends and families of
36 those affected by the epidemic; and
37 **WHEREAS**, On “Black Balloon Day,” individuals and organizations
38 across the country display a black balloon outside of their homes
39 and businesses and in the community as a sign they have been
40 affected by drug addiction or an overdose death; and
41 **WHEREAS**, “Black Balloon Day” has become a national and
42 international event aimed at bringing awareness to drug overdose
43 deaths and paying tribute to individuals who have lost their lives to
44 opioid addiction; now, therefore,
45
46 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of
47 New Jersey:

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2. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a proclamation recognizing March 6 as “Black Balloon Day” in New Jersey, and call upon public officials and the citizens of this State to observe the day with appropriate activities and programs.

STATEMENT

Under this joint resolution, the Governor is respectfully requested to issue an annual proclamation recognizing March 6 as “Black Balloon Day” in NJ and call upon public officials and the citizens of this state to observe the day with appropriate activities and programs.