

ASSEMBLY HEALTH COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION No. 54

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 24, 2022

The Assembly Health Committee reports favorably Assembly Joint Resolution No. 54 with committee amendments.

As amended by the committee, this joint resolution designates July of each year as “Self-Care Awareness Month” in New Jersey.

Self-care is a lifelong daily habit of making healthy lifestyle choices, practicing good hygiene, preventing infection and illness, avoiding unhealthy choices, monitoring for signs and symptoms of changes in health, knowing when to consult a healthcare practitioner, and knowing when it is appropriate to self-treat conditions. Self-care also involves engaging in activities that promote well-being and reduce stress.

New Jersey benefits when its citizens practice appropriate self-care and are subsequently empowered by higher self-esteem and improved health. Practicing proper self-care also reduces health care visits and cost. According to an Information Resources, Inc. study, each dollar spent on over-the-counter medicines saves the healthcare system more than seven dollars, resulting in more than \$146 billion in annual savings. Over-the-counter medical items such as bandages, menstrual products, face masks, and at-home test kits used for prevention, testing, and treatment result in cost savings for the healthcare system. Consumption of vitamin and mineral supplements can fill critical nutrient gaps, particularly for lower income families that may experience food insecurity.

New Jersey encourages its citizens to take advantage of the potential of self-care to improve personal and public health, save personal and public monies, and strengthen the sustainability of New Jersey’s health care system.

Achieving the potential of self-care is a shared opportunity for consumers, healthcare practitioners, policymakers, and regulators.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2022-2023 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments:

- 1) change the designation month from September to July;

- 2) state that over-the-counter medicines and medical items result in annual savings;
- 3) state that consumption of vitamin and mineral supplements can fill nutrient gaps; and
- 4) update the synopsis and title.