

SENATE STATE GOVERNMENT, WAGERING, TOURISM &  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1729

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: JUNE 14, 2018

The Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism and Historic Preservation Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1729.

This bill designates *Streptomyces griseus* as the official microbe of the State of New Jersey. *Streptomyces griseus* is a soil-based microorganism that was discovered in 1916 and later celebrated for its groundbreaking use as an antibiotic. *Streptomyces griseus* drew international headlines in 1943 after a research team from Rutgers University, led by Dr. Albert Schatz and Dr. Selman Waksman, used the microbe to create streptomycin, the world's first antibiotic for tuberculosis. Prior to this discovery, tuberculosis was one of the deadliest diseases in human history; throughout the early 1900s, tuberculosis was the second leading cause of death in the United States. However, within 10 years of its release, tuberculosis-related deaths dropped to an all-time low due to the widespread use of streptomycin. Dr. Waksman was later awarded a Nobel Prize in 1952 for his role in leading the discovery.

Although *Streptomyces griseus* and streptomycin were two of the most consequential discoveries of the twentieth century, few people remember these historical accomplishments or the distinguished New Jerseyans who helped cure the deadliest disease of their age. Designating *Streptomyces griseus* as the official microbe of New Jersey will raise public awareness of this great achievement.