

**SENATE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 164**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 13, 2019

Sponsored by:

Senator TROY SINGLETON

District 7 (Burlington)

Senator FRED H. MADDEN, JR.

District 4 (Camden and Gloucester)

Assemblyman HERB CONAWAY, JR.

District 7 (Burlington)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Assemblywoman NANCY J. PINKIN

District 18 (Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:

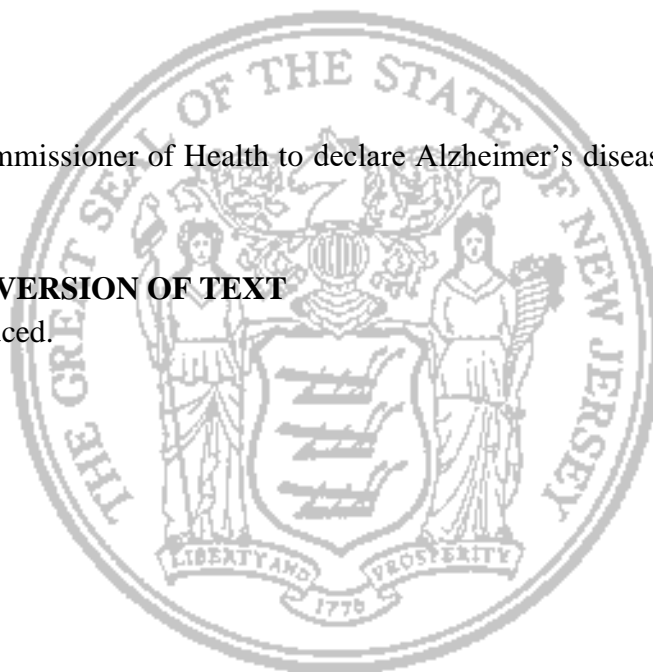
**Senators Brown, Gopal, Assemblymen Johnson, Milam, Benson,
Assemblywomen McKnight, Timberlake, Swain and Assemblyman Tully**

SYNOPSIS

Urges Commissioner of Health to declare Alzheimer's disease public health crisis.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/17/2019)

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** urging the Commissioner of Health
2 to declare Alzheimer’s disease a public health crisis.
3

4 **WHEREAS**, Alzheimer's disease is a degenerative brain disease of
5 unknown cause that is the most common form of dementia.
6 Alzheimer’s disease usually occurs in people age 65 and older,
7 although early-onset Alzheimer’s disease can occur as well. The
8 condition results in progressive memory loss, impaired thinking,
9 disorientation, and changes in personality and mood, and in
10 advanced cases leads to a profound decline in cognitive and
11 physical functioning. Alzheimer’s disease is marked histologically
12 by the degeneration of brain neurons, especially in the cerebral
13 cortex, and by the presence of neurofibrillary tangles and plaques
14 containing beta-amyloid; and

15 **WHEREAS**, Alzheimer’s disease, which currently has no cure, is the
16 sixth leading cause of death in adults age 18 or older in the United
17 States and in New Jersey; and

18 **WHEREAS**, Although the onset of Alzheimer's disease cannot yet be
19 stopped or reversed, early detection and diagnosis allows people
20 with dementia and their families not only a better chance of
21 receiving and benefiting from treatment, care, and support services,
22 but also more time to put legal, financial, and advance directives in
23 place for the future; and

24 **WHEREAS**, Although Alzheimer’s disease has been traditionally seen
25 as an aging issue, Alzheimer’s is also a public health issue, because
26 the burden to society is large, the impact is major, and there are
27 ways to intervene throughout the lifespan; and

28 **WHEREAS**, With no currently definitive interventions to prevent
29 Alzheimer’s disease, essential public health services of early
30 detection, risk reduction, and surveillance are necessary to protect
31 and improve the health at a population level, as called for in The
32 Healthy Brain Initiative’s “State and Local Public Health
33 Partnerships to Address Dementia: The 2018-2023 Road Map”
34 developed by the Alzheimer’s Association and the Centers for
35 Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and

36 **WHEREAS**, In conjunction with the CDC, the New Jersey Department
37 of Health annually conducts the New Jersey Behavioral Risk Factor
38 Survey (NJBRFS) to gather statewide public health data; and

39 **WHEREAS**, In the 2016 NJBRFS, over nine percent of New Jersey
40 residents aged 45 and older reported an increase in confusion or
41 worsening memory loss, and about half of them had not discussed
42 these cognitive concerns with a health care provider; and

43 **WHEREAS**, Caregiving for individuals with Alzheimer’s disease often
44 takes an enormous toll on family members, and therefore creating
45 opportunities to reduce caregivers’ stress, depression, injuries, and
46 additional health problems is important; and

47 **WHEREAS**, It is the intent of the Legislature to increase awareness of
48 Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias, address cognitive

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1 impairment, promote brain health, and meet the needs of caregivers;
2 and

3 **WHEREAS**, The Legislature recognizes the important responsibility the
4 Department of Health has in promoting and encouraging healthy
5 behaviors among the general public, increasing early detection and
6 diagnosis of disease and disability, reducing risk of future illness
7 and injury, educating the health care workforce, and monitoring
8 public health in the State; now, therefore,

10 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey (the*
11 *General Assembly concurring):*

13 1. The Commissioner of Health is respectfully urged to declare
14 Alzheimer's disease a public health crisis.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the Secretary of the Senate to the Commissioner of Health.

STATEMENT

23 This resolution urges the Commissioner of Health to declare
24 Alzheimer's disease a public health crisis.

Alzheimer's disease is a degenerative brain disease of unknown cause that is the most common form of dementia. Alzheimer's disease usually occurs in people age 65 and older, although early-onset Alzheimer's disease can occur as well. The condition results in progressive memory loss, impaired thinking, disorientation, and changes in personality and mood, and in advanced cases leads to a profound decline in cognitive and physical functioning. Alzheimer's disease currently has no cure, and is the sixth leading cause of death in adults age 18 or older in the United States and in New Jersey.

Although Alzheimer’s disease has been traditionally seen as an aging issue, Alzheimer’s is also a public health issue, because the burden to society is large, the impact is major, and there are ways to intervene throughout the lifespan. With no currently definitive interventions to prevent Alzheimer’s disease, essential public health services of early detection, risk reduction, and surveillance are necessary to protect and improve the health at a population level, as called for in The Healthy Brain Initiative’s “State and Local Public Health Partnerships to Address Dementia: The 2018-2023 Road Map” developed by the Alzheimer’s Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In conjunction with the CDC, the New Jersey Department of Health annually conducts the New Jersey Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (NJBRFS) to gather statewide public health data; in the

1 2016 NJBRFS, over nine percent of New Jersey residents aged 45
2 and older reported an increase in confusion or worsening memory
3 loss, and about half of them had not discussed these cognitive
4 concerns with a health care provider.

5 Caregiving for individuals with Alzheimer's disease often takes
6 an enormous toll on family members, and therefore creating
7 opportunities to reduce caregivers' stress, depression, injuries, and
8 additional health problems is important.

9 In calling for a declaration of a public health crisis, the
10 Legislature recognizes the important responsibility the Department
11 of Health has in promoting and encouraging healthy behaviors
12 among the general public, increasing early detection and diagnosis
13 of disease and disability, reducing risk of future illness and injury,
14 educating the health care workforce, and monitoring public health
15 in the State.