



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

WHEREAS, Huntington's Disease (HD) is a rare, fatal, and inherited condition that causes nerve cells in parts of the brain to gradually break down and die, leading to physical and mental deterioration over a 10-25-year period; and

WHEREAS, common symptoms of HD include uncontrollable muscle movements, loss of coordination, and personality changes; as HD progresses, symptoms such as speech impairment, memory loss, and involuntary muscle movements (chorea) become more severe; and

WHEREAS, HD symptoms can develop at any time, they most often occur in people in their 30s or 40s; about 10% have onset of motor symptoms after age 60, and 10% have Juvenile onset HD, where symptoms manifest before age 20; Juvenile HD (JHD) accounts for 5 - 10% of all HD cases. JHD is less common but usually progresses more rapidly than adult-onset HD. The earlier the onset, the faster the disease progresses. Death often occurs within 10 years of JHD onset, as opposed to 10 - 25 years in adult-onset HD; and

WHEREAS, everyone carries the huntingtin (HTT) gene; however, in 1993, researchers identified a genetic mutation that produces a toxic, elongated huntingtin protein, which causes progressive neuronal death in the brain. Since that discovery, the pace of HD research has accelerated, and several medications have been developed to help manage symptoms, though a cure has not yet been found; and

WHEREAS, approximately 41,000 people in the U.S. have HD, and another 200,000 individuals may be at risk because HD follows an autosomal dominant inheritance pattern, meaning a child with an affected parent has a 50% chance of inheriting the mutation; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 900 - 1,200 New Jersey residents with HD. The incidence of HD is estimated at 1 in 8,000 to 1 in 10,000 state residents. About 7,000 at-risk individuals in New Jersey seek services like clinical exams, genetic testing, prenatal diagnoses, and counseling affecting families of all ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, those at risk may experience tremendous stress from uncertainty and a sense of responsibility. In the community, lack of knowledge about HD may keep friends and neighbors from offering social and emotional support to the family, fostering unnecessary isolation; and

WHEREAS, the NJ Chapter of the Huntington's Disease Society of America, and NJ Cure HD, in collaboration with the Hereditary Disease Foundation and the International Huntington Study Group, are celebrating Huntington's Disease Awareness Month to educate the public and support families affected by this devastating disease;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mikie Sherrill, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

MAY 2026

AS

HUNTINGTON'S DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

in New Jersey.



GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this sixteenth day of March in the year two thousand twenty-six, the two hundred fiftieth year of the Independence of the United States.

Dale G. Coburn
Lt. GOVERNOR

Mikie Sherrill
GOVERNOR