

December 11, 2024

WHEREAS, **National Birth Defects Prevention Month** every January is a time to raise awareness about birth defects and highlight efforts to improve the health of people living with these conditions across their lifespan; and

WHEREAS, these structural changes present at birth can affect one or more parts of the body (e.g., heart, brain, foot) and mostly develop in the first three months when a baby's organs are forming. Common birth defects include congenital heart defects, cleft lip and left palate and spina bifida; and

WHEREAS, birth defects affect one in every **33 babies (120,000 annually)** born in the United States each year; birth defects are the leading cause of infant deaths, accounting for 20% of all infant death; and

WHEREAS, not only can birth defects lead to lifelong challenges and disability, they are also the most common cause of death in infants and the second most common cause of death in children aged one to four years; and

WHEREAS, not all birth defects can be prevented. But a woman can take steps to reduce the chance that a child will be born with a birth defect, such as taking a daily vitamin with folic acid before and during pregnancy, getting regular prenatal care, becoming up-to-date with vaccinations, reaching a healthy weight before pregnancy and stopping the use of alcohol or drugs during pregnancy; and


WHEREAS, finding resources, knowing what to expect, and planning for the future can help. Early intervention services and supports can have a significant impact on a child's ability to learn new skills, overcome challenges, and increase success in school and life; and

WHEREAS, the good health and well-being of the people of Ocean County are enhanced by the support of a national effort to educate about and prevent birth defects; and

WHEREAS, the Ocean County Board of Health joins with the **March of Dimes, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Association of University Centers on Disabilities and the National Birth Defects Prevention Network**, as well as many dedicated volunteers, healthcare professionals, and parent groups by participating in this promotion.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the OCEAN COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH, County of Ocean, State of New Jersey does hereby proclaim the month of **January 2025 as National Birth Defects Prevention Month.**

Name	Bacchione	Gupta	Hill	Kubiel	Laureigh	Mancini	Scaturro	Singer	Mallon
Ayes	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Abstain									
Nays									
Absent				✓		✓			



 Secretary/Treasurer