SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION No. 22

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 14, 2022

The Senate Commerce Committee reports favorably Senate Joint Resolution No. 22.

This Joint Resolution designates the second week of June of each year as "Kids Entrepreneurship Awareness Week."

Entrepreneurship is the capacity and willingness to develop, organize, and manage a business venture, along with any of its risks, in order to make a profit. Through the power of ownership, entrepreneurs are their own bosses, free to design jobs that are the most fulfilling, flexible, and meaningful for them. Entrepreneurship holds great potential in establishing an individual's pathway to wealth and prosperity, particularly for people in low-income communities.

As small business owners, entrepreneurs also play a significant role in driving America's economy and building its workforce. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, the nation's 25.8 million small businesses employ more than 50 percent of the private workforce, generate more than half of the gross domestic product, and are the principal source of new jobs.

Despite the many benefits of entrepreneurship, young people rarely receive any information about business ownership as a career option or any formal education on how to achieve such a goal. This lack of focus on entrepreneurship education may be the reason why, according to the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, New Jersey's rate of start-up growth dropped from 64.89 percent in 2015 to 51.52 percent in 2016, ranking the State 20th among the survey's 25 evaluated states.

Many experts believe that the skills of entrepreneurship must be developed over time through experience and instruction. Therefore, it is vital for New Jersey parents, teachers, and community leaders to work together to prepare the State's youth to be responsible, enterprising individuals, immersing them in real life learning environments where they can take risks, manage the results, and learn from the outcome. The lessons of entrepreneurship also include highly transferable skills sought by all employers, such as time management, leadership development and interpersonal competency, so those lessons are meaningful for all children, not just future entrepreneurs.

New Jersey legislators and the Governor are uniquely positioned to lead the effort to educate our State's youth about the possibilities of a career in entrepreneurship and the skills needed to run a thriving business. In doing so, the Legislature and the Governor can help ensure that the future of entrepreneurship in this State is defined by innovative and confident business leaders who are capable of advancing successful careers that contribute to New Jersey's economic growth.

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