

Recognizing **HEALTHCARE DECISIONS DAY**

WHEREAS: Healthcare Decisions Day is designed to raise public awareness of the need to plan ahead for health care decisions related to end of life care and medical decision-making whenever patients are unable to speak for themselves and to encourage the specific use of advance directives to communicate these important health care decisions; and

WHEREAS: The laws of the State of New Jersey provide for the specifics of our advance directives and offer a model form for patient use; and

WHEREAS: It is estimated that only about 20 percent of people in New Jersey have executed an advance directive. Moreover, it is estimated that less than 50 percent of severely or terminally ill patients have an advance directive; and

WHEREAS: It is likely that a significant reason for these low percentages is that there is both a lack of knowledge and considerable confusion in the public about Advance Directives; and

WHEREAS: One of the principal goals of Healthcare Decisions Day is to encourage hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, continuing care retirement communities, and hospices to participate in a State-wide effort to provide clear and consistent information to the public about advance directives, as well as to encourage medical professionals and lawyers to volunteer their time and efforts to improve public knowledge and increase the number of our citizens with advance directives; and

WHEREAS: The Tri-County Regional Ethics Committee and other organizations throughout New Jersey have endorsed this event and are committed to educating the public about the importance of discussing health care choices and executing advance directives; and

WHEREAS: As a result of April 14, 2016 being recognized as Healthcare Decisions Day in Washington Township, Gloucester County, New Jersey, more citizens will have conversations about their health care decisions; more citizens will execute Advance Directives to make their wishes known; and fewer families and health care providers will have to struggle with making difficult health care decisions in the absence of guidance from the patient.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Barbara A. Wallace, Mayor of Washington Township and representing its people, do hereby recognize April 14, 2016 as **HEALTHCARE DECISIONS DAY** in Washington Township, Gloucester County, New Jersey, and I call this observance to the attention of all our residents.