EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 114

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to spread around the globe, with some reports indicating that there are now over one million cases of COVID-19 worldwide and over 245,000 cases in the United States; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey has been particularly hard-hit by COVID-19, with 29,895 residents testing positive for COVID-19 and 646 of our fellow New Jerseyans losing their lives; and

WHEREAS, these individuals were family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors, and include healthcare workers, first responders, and others who gave their lives working bravely and tirelessly on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, each and every life lost to COVID-19 is a profound tragedy for us all; and

WHEREAS, we sadly know that even despite our aggressive efforts, the number of lives lost will continue to rise dramatically in the coming weeks and months, both here in New Jersey, throughout the United States, and around the world; and

WHEREAS, the prohibition of social gatherings, which is necessary to prevent further spread of the virus and loss of life, prevents funerals from going forward in the manner that they would under normal circumstances; and

WHEREAS, as a result, we cannot properly mourn the loss of individuals who pass away during this time, whether from COVID-19 or other causes, and say the goodbye that each and every one of them deserves; and

WHEREAS, while nothing can fully make up for this cruel reality, lowering the flags to half-staff can symbolize our State's collective grief and cause us all to remember the awful human toll that this pandemic has inflicted upon this State, our nation, and the world; and

WHEREAS, it is with great sorrow that we mourn the passing of all those who have lost their lives to COVID-19 and those who may lose their lives in the future, and extend our deepest sympathy to their families, friends, colleagues, and communities; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate for us all to keep in our thoughts and prayers all of those who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and are suffering;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, PHILIP D. MURPHY, Governor of the State of New Jersey, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the Statutes of this State, do hereby ORDER and DIRECT:

1. The flag of the United States of America and the flag of New Jersey shall be flown at half-staff at all State departments, offices, agencies, and instrumentalities indefinitely, starting on Friday, April 3, 2020, in recognition and mourning of all those who have lost their lives and have been affected by COVID-19.

2. This Order shall take effect immediately.

GIVEN, under my hand and seal this 3rd day of April, Two Thousand and Twenty, and of the Independence of the United States, the Two Hundred and Forty-Fourth.

[seal]

/s/ Philip D. Murphy

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Matthew J. Platkin

Chief Counsel to the Governor