

# ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 153

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 16, 2022

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT**

**District 31 (Hudson)**

**Assemblyman BENJIE E. WIMBERLY**

**District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)**

**Assemblyman WAYNE P. DEANGELO**

**District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Assemblyman Umba, Assemblywomen N.Munoz and Speight**

**SYNOPSIS**

Recognizes and honors critical energy and utility infrastructure workforce for service during COVID-19 pandemic and recent extreme weather events.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/5/2023)**

AR153 MCKNIGHT, WIMBERLY

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- 1 **AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION** recognizing and honoring the critical  
2 energy and utility infrastructure workforce for their service  
3 during the COVID-19 pandemic and recent extreme weather  
4 events.  
5
- 6 **WHEREAS**, Among the individuals tasked with keeping the State safe  
7 and functioning during the COVID-19 pandemic were those  
8 employed in the critical energy and utility infrastructure workforce;  
9 and
- 10 **WHEREAS**, The assets, systems, and networks, whether physical or  
11 virtual, that comprise critical energy and utility infrastructure in  
12 New Jersey are considered so vital to the State that their  
13 incapacitation or destruction would have a debilitating effect on  
14 public health and safety, security, and the economy; and
- 15 **WHEREAS**, With many residents sheltering in place during the  
16 COVID-19 pandemic, residential water, gas, and energy  
17 consumption increased; and
- 18 **WHEREAS**, Based on data obtained from the United States Energy  
19 Information Administration, New Jersey's residential energy  
20 consumption increased 11.8 percent from the second quarter of  
21 2019 to the second quarter of 2020; and
- 22 **WHEREAS**, The increase in residential energy and utility consumption,  
23 especially during non-traditional hours, placed an enormous strain  
24 on existing energy and utility infrastructure and the critical  
25 infrastructure workforce; and
- 26 **WHEREAS**, Through innovation, perseverance, and dedication, the  
27 New Jersey critical energy and utility infrastructure workforce was  
28 able to successfully stabilize increased residential utility service  
29 demand, while also working to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by  
30 following social distancing guidelines; and
- 31 **WHEREAS**, The already-challenging task of managing the  
32 unprecedented demand in residential energy and utility service due  
33 to the COVID-19 pandemic was further compounded by several  
34 extreme weather events that occurred during 2020 and 2021; and
- 35 **WHEREAS**, July 2020 was the hottest month ever recorded in New  
36 Jersey, causing spikes in electricity demand as New Jerseyans  
37 sought to cool their homes; and
- 38 **WHEREAS**, The record-setting heat wave was immediately followed by  
39 Tropical Storm Isaias on August 4, 2020, which left approximately  
40 1.4 million households without power; and
- 41 **WHEREAS**, In the midst of the still-raging global COVID-19  
42 pandemic, the critical energy and utility infrastructure workforce  
43 across the State worked diligently to restore power to almost all  
44 affected New Jersey customers within a week of the tropical storm;  
45 and
- 46 **WHEREAS**, On September 1, 2021, the second-deadliest storm in New  
47 Jersey's history, Tropical Storm Ida, ripped across the State,

1 leaving 30 New Jerseyans dead and causing billions of dollars in  
2 property damage; and

3 **WHEREAS**, The critical energy and utility infrastructure workforce was  
4 deployed around the clock in the wake of Tropical Storm Ida to  
5 mitigate widespread flooding, restore power, and stop reported gas  
6 leaks that could have led to further casualties and damage; and

7 **WHEREAS**, The dedicated, hardworking individuals that make up New  
8 Jersey's critical energy and utility infrastructure workforce, through  
9 their steadfast service during an unprecedented global pandemic  
10 and several extreme weather events, have earned our highest  
11 respect and deepest gratitude; and

12 **WHEREAS**, It is therefore fitting and proper to recognize and honor the  
13 dedicated and invaluable service of the critical energy and utility  
14 infrastructure workforce and their invaluable efforts to safeguard  
15 this State's public health and safety, security, and economy during  
16 the COVID-19 pandemic and recent extreme weather events; now,  
17 therefore,

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19 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the General Assembly of the State of New  
20 Jersey:

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22 1. This House recognizes and honors the dedicated and  
23 invaluable service provided by the critical energy and utility  
24 infrastructure workforce of New Jersey during the COVID-19  
25 pandemic and recent extreme weather events.

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27 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of the  
28 State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to  
29 the Governor of this State and to every member of Congress elected  
30 from this State.

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#### STATEMENT

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35 This resolution recognizes and honors the critical energy and  
36 utility infrastructure workforce in New Jersey for their service  
37 during the COVID-19 pandemic and recent extreme weather events.  
38 According to data collected by the United States Energy  
39 Information Administration, residential energy consumption in New  
40 Jersey increased by 11.8 percent from the second quarter of 2019 to  
41 the second quarter of 2020. These shifts in demand placed an  
42 increased burden on the energy and utility companies that operate  
43 within the State and their employees. Despite the challenges posed  
44 by increasing residential utility demand during the global COVID-  
45 19 pandemic, the critical energy and utility infrastructure workforce  
46 rose to the challenge and was able to effectively stabilize residential  
47 energy and utility demand in the State.

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1 Further compounding the novel challenges posed by providing  
2 energy and utilities during the COVID-19 pandemic were several  
3 extreme weather events that occurred in the State within the last  
4 two years. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, New  
5 Jersey has experienced its hottest month on record, second deadliest  
6 storm, and largest power outage since Superstorm Sandy in 2012.  
7 In each case, energy and utility workers responded with dedication  
8 and courage, oftentimes being dispatched into extreme weather, to  
9 serve the emergent needs of the State.