

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 177

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 23, 2023

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman SEAN T. KEAN

District 30 (Monmouth and Ocean)

Assemblyman EDWARD H. THOMSON

District 30 (Monmouth and Ocean)

Assemblyman ALEX SAUICKIE

District 12 (Burlington, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean)

SYNOPSIS

Urges Governor and Attorney General to provide assistance to municipalities in response to unpermitted mass gatherings and “pop-up parties” in New Jersey.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/23/2023)

1 **AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION** urging the Governor and the Attorney
2 General to provide assistance to municipalities in response to
3 unpermitted mass gatherings and “pop-up parties” in New Jersey.
4

5 **WHEREAS**, Municipalities in New Jersey are the repositories of local
6 police power through their authority to legislate for the general
7 health, safety, and welfare of their residents; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Special event permits for events such as block parties,
9 parades, festivals, and carnivals are required by municipalities so
10 local officials and law enforcement may accurately predict the
11 resources and services needed to prepare for and manage crowds;
12 and

13 **WHEREAS**, Local communities across our State have experienced a
14 major increase in the number of unpermitted mass gatherings, also
15 known as “pop-up parties,” that take place on public streets,
16 beaches, and parks; and

17 **WHEREAS**, These unpermitted mass gatherings are organized and
18 promoted prominently through the use of social media, where event
19 information may suddenly appear and be quickly disseminated; and

20 **WHEREAS**, Large crowds drawn to these unpermitted mass gatherings
21 present an exponentially greater risk of injury and damage caused
22 by crowd-driven destructive behavior, especially when paired with
23 youthfulness, drugs and alcohol, and lack of individual
24 accountability; and

25 **WHEREAS**, The inherent danger of these unpermitted mass gatherings
26 was no more evident than on September 24, 2022, when an
27 unsanctioned automotive event known as a “street take over”
28 terrorized the municipality of Wildwood, resulting in multiple
29 accounts of pedestrian injuries, thousands of dollars in property
30 damage, and the tragic deaths of two individuals; and

31 **WHEREAS**, Local law enforcement and municipal officials have
32 worked together in an attempt to prevent these unpermitted mass
33 gatherings, and to quell the disorderly and dangerous conduct that
34 occurs at these unpermitted mass gatherings, but municipalities and
35 local law enforcement agencies are not routinely equipped to handle
36 large, abrupt influxes of borderline riotous crowds; and

37 **WHEREAS**, The New Jersey State League of Municipalities
38 Conference passed Resolution No. 2022-13 calling upon the
39 Governor, the Legislature, and the Attorney General to work
40 together and take meaningful, legislative action that addresses the
41 issues stemming from unpermitted mass gatherings; and

42 **WHEREAS**, Legislation has been proposed that establishes curfews,
43 upgrades criminal penalties at unpermitted mass gatherings, funds
44 State Police assistance to local law enforcement, and establishes a
45 temporary social media surveillance unit; and

46 **WHEREAS**, It is altogether fitting and proper to respectfully urge the
47 Governor and the Attorney General to find permanent solutions that

1 increase municipalities' resources and enhance their responses to
2 unpermitted mass gatherings; now, therefore,

3

4 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the General Assembly of the State of New*
5 *Jersey:*

6

7 1. This House respectfully urges the Governor and the Attorney
8 General to provide assistance to municipalities to help maintain
9 order, protect the general public, and restore peace to communities
10 when individuals and groups spontaneously engage in disorderly
11 and violent behavior.

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13 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
14 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the
15 Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Attorney General.

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STATEMENT

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20 This resolution urges the Governor and the Attorney General to
21 take necessary measures to bolster municipalities' responses to
22 unpermitted mass gatherings and "pop-up parties" across the State.
23 Municipalities require special event permits for activities such as
24 block parties, festivals, flea markets, carnivals, concerts, and non-
25 spontaneous public demonstrations. The permitting process may
26 require up to several months' notice to municipalities so they can
27 effectively predict and adequately prepare the resources and
28 personnel necessary to manage large crowds at particular events.
29 Additionally, the permitting process allows municipalities to deny
30 the permit application if such an event does not seem practical.

31

32 Local communities in New Jersey, primarily near beaches and
33 other hubs of community activity, have experienced a major
34 increase in spontaneous, unpermitted mass gatherings that bring
35 along disorderly and dangerous conduct. So called "pop-up parties"
36 present a great risk of destructive, crowd-driven behavior and
37 dangers that cannot be foreseen. Local law enforcement and
38 municipal officials have worked together to prevent these
39 unpermitted mass gatherings from taking place with varying
degrees of success.

40

41 The New Jersey State League of Municipalities passed a
42 resolution at its 2022 Conference calling for State assistance and
43 solutions to the myriad issues posed by unpermitted mass
44 gatherings. State assistance may allow municipalities to better
45 anticipate potential unpermitted mass gatherings, hold organizers
46 and attendees who incite hazards accountable for their misdeeds,
and dissuade future pop-up gatherings.