P.L. 2023, Joint Resolution No. 14, *approved August 7*, *2023*Assembly Joint Resolution No. 195

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION designating the third week of September of 2 each year as "New Jersey Rail Safety Week." 3 4 WHEREAS, The State and federal government have a responsibility to 5 maintain a robust multimodal transportation network that not only serves the mobility needs of all residents but also ensures the safety 6 7 of all persons who navigate this system; and 8 WHEREAS, Points of intersection with railroad tracks, including 9 highway grade crossings and pedestrian trespassings, often 10 represent the highest risk of catastrophic injury for motorists and 11 pedestrians; and 12 WHEREAS, According to the Federal Railroad Administration, New 13 Jersey witnessed at least 16 deaths and 45 non-fatal injuries from 14 motor vehicle accidents along highway grade crossings since 2017, as well as 10 deaths and 17 non-fatal injuries from pedestrian 15 16 trespass incidents during this period; and WHEREAS, Many of these tragic events could have been prevented by 17 18 increased public awareness concerning the dangers of railroad 19 crossings and the importance of following appropriate safety 20 measures; and 21 WHEREAS, The State of New Jersey is a leader in supporting safety 22 programs dedicated to reducing collisions, fatalities, and injuries 23 along highway-rail crossings and railroad tracks; and 24 WHEREAS, New Jersey Operation Lifesaver, a non-profit organization established in 1978, has also played an important role in increasing 25 public awareness of rail safety issues and providing public safety 26 27 education programs for communities throughout the State; and 28 WHEREAS, The efforts of New Jersey Operation Lifesaver are strongly supported by this State, as well as industry stakeholders, such as the 29 New Jersey Railroad Association; and 30 31 WHEREAS, Since 2017, Operation Lifesaver has annually observed the third week of September as "Rail Safety Week" in an attempt to 32 33 empower the public to make safe and informed decisions when 34 traveling nearby railroad infrastructure; and 35 WHEREAS, It is altogether fitting and proper for the State of New 36 Jersey to honor this annual observance in order to increase public 37 awareness of rail safety issues and to encourage all motorists and 38 pedestrians to take appropriate caution nearby trains and railroad 39 tracks; now, therefore, 40 41 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate and General Assembly of the

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State of New Jersey:

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1. The third full week of September of each year is designated as "New Jersey Rail Safety Week" in the State of New Jersey to increase public awareness of rail safety issues and to encourage all motorists and pedestrians to take appropriate caution when traveling nearby railroad infrastructure.

2. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a proclamation designating the third full week of September as "New Jersey Rail Safety Week" and shall call upon the public officials and citizens of this State to observe the day with appropriate activities and programs.

3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This joint resolution designates the third full week of September of each year as "New Jersey Rail Safety Week."

The State and federal government have a responsibility to maintain a robust multimodal transportation network that not only serves the mobility needs of all residents but also ensures the safety of all persons who navigate this system. Points of intersection with railroad tracks, including highway grade crossings and pedestrian trespassings, often represent the highest risk of catastrophic injury for motorists and pedestrians. According to the Federal Railroad Administration, New Jersey witnessed at least 16 deaths and 45 non-fatal injuries from motor vehicle accidents along highway grade crossings since 2017, as well as 10 deaths and 17 non-fatal injuries from pedestrian trespass incidents during this period.

Many of these tragic events could have been prevented by increased public awareness concerning the dangers of railroad crossings and the importance of following appropriate safety measures. In response, the State of New Jersey has become a leader in supporting safety programs dedicated to reducing collisions, fatalities, and injuries along highway-rail crossings and railroad tracks. Additionally, New Jersey Operation Lifesaver, a non-profit organization established in 1978, has also played an important role in increasing public awareness of rail safety issues and providing public safety education programs for communities throughout the State.

Since 2017, Operation Lifesaver has annually observed the third week of September as "Rail Safety Week" in an attempt to empower the public to make safe and informed decisions when traveling nearby railroad infrastructure. Accordingly, it is altogether fitting and proper for the State of New Jersey to honor this annual observance in order to increase public awareness of rail safety

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