

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 97

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 22, 2022

Sponsored by:

Senator PATRICK J. DIEGNAN, JR.

District 18 (Middlesex)

Senator GORDON M. JOHNSON

District 37 (Bergen)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Pou and Durr

SYNOPSIS

Designates third week of September of each year as “New Jersey Rail Safety Week.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/20/2023)

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
6 serves the mobility needs of all residents but also ensures the safety
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,
15 as well as 10 deaths and 17 non-fatal injuries from pedestrian
16 trespass incidents during this period; and

17 **WHEREAS**, Many of these tragic events could have been prevented by
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
25 established in 1978, has also played an important role in increasing
26 public awareness of rail safety issues and providing public safety
27 education programs for communities throughout the State; and

28 **WHEREAS**, The efforts of New Jersey Operation Lifesaver are strongly
29 supported by this State, as well as industry stakeholders, such as the
30 New Jersey Railroad Association; and

31 **WHEREAS**, Since 2017, Operation Lifesaver has annually observed the
32 third week of September as “Rail Safety Week” in an attempt to
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*
42 *State of New Jersey:*

43
44 1. The third full week of September of each year is designated
45 as “New Jersey Rail Safety Week” in the State of New Jersey to
46 increase public awareness of rail safety issues and to encourage all
47 motorists and pedestrians to take appropriate caution when traveling
48 nearby railroad infrastructure.

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

6
7 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.
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9

10 **STATEMENT**
11

12 This joint resolution designates the third full week of September
13 of each year as “New Jersey Rail Safety Week.”

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

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

36 Since 2017, Operation Lifesaver has annually observed the third
37 week of September as “Rail Safety Week” in an attempt to
38 empower the public to make safe and informed decisions when
39 traveling nearby railroad infrastructure. Accordingly, it is altogether
40 fitting and proper for the State of New Jersey to honor this annual
41 observance in order to increase public awareness of rail safety
42 issues and to encourage all motorists and pedestrians to take
43 appropriate caution nearby trains and railroad tracks.