# 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)

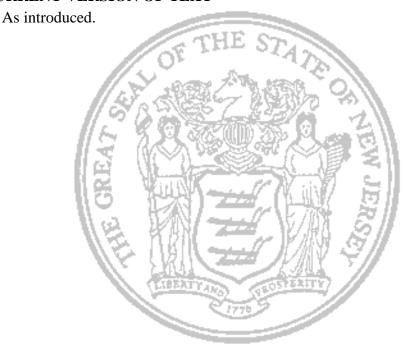
Co-Sponsored by:

**Senators Pou and Durr** 

### **SYNOPSIS**

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

### **CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**



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

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| 1        | A JOINT RESOLUTION designating the third week of September of                                                                            |
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| 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<br>10  | highway grade crossings and pedestrian trespassings, often<br>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<br>36 | WHEREAS, It is altogether fitting and proper for the State of New Jorsey to honor this annual observance in order to increase public     |
| 37       | Jersey to honor this annual observance in order to increase public<br>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       | tracks, now, therefore,                                                                                                                  |
| 41       | BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate and General Assembly of the                                                                                 |
| 42       | State of New Jersey:                                                                                                                     |
| 43       | Simile of Item bersey.                                                                                                                   |
| 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                                                                     |

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nearby railroad infrastructure.

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| 2. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a     |
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| 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 issues and to encourage all motorists and pedestrians to take appropriate caution nearby trains and railroad tracks.