

# ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 56

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2024 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

Assemblyman REGINALD W. ATKINS

District 20 (Union)

Assemblywoman LINDA S. CARTER

District 22 (Somerset and Union)

**Co-Sponsored by:**

Assemblyman Stanley, Assemblywomen Murphy and Speight

**SYNOPSIS**

Designates May of each year as “Older Americans Month” in New Jersey.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1   **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating the month of May of each year  
2       as “Older Americans Month” in New Jersey.  
3  
4   **WHEREAS**, In 2020, there were more than 55 million individuals who  
5       were 65 years of age or older in the United States, including 1.5  
6       million individuals in the State of New Jersey, and those  
7       individuals accounted for approximately 17 percent of the national  
8       and State population; and  
9   **WHEREAS**, Older Americans have made immeasurable contributions  
10      to the social, civic, and economic fabric of this State and country;  
11      and  
12   **WHEREAS**, The contributions and sacrifices that older Americans have  
13      made is no more apparent than in the example of our older veterans,  
14      whose strength and resilience throughout the twentieth and early  
15      twenty-first century safeguarded the nation’s continued liberty and  
16      prosperity; and  
17   **WHEREAS**, Older Americans continue to play an important role in  
18      society by contributing their experience, knowledge, wisdom, and  
19      accomplishments through vital community roles such as volunteer  
20      work, the arts, cultural activities, civic engagement, and the  
21      workforce; and  
22   **WHEREAS**, Fewer workers are transitioning directly from full-time  
23      work to full-time retirement, with some taking part-time positions  
24      with their current or new employers and others becoming self-  
25      employed, both to help maintain the sense of purpose associated  
26      with employment and to remain financially flexible in an uncertain  
27      economy; and  
28   **WHEREAS**, In New Jersey, the percentage of older Americans in the  
29      workforce increased from 18.1 percent in 2020 to 37 percent in  
30      2022, the largest workforce participation rate increase in the  
31      country; and  
32   **WHEREAS**, According to the American Associated of Retired Persons,  
33      nearly 80 percent of workers aged 40 to 65 have experienced age  
34      discrimination in the workplace, with nearly all workers polled  
35      believing laws to combat age discrimination should be stronger; and  
36   **WHEREAS**, The coronavirus pandemic has posed unique challenges for  
37      older Americans, as the risk of becoming severely ill from COVID-  
38      19 increases with age; and  
39   **WHEREAS**, Due to their vulnerability to severe illness from COVID-  
40      19, many older Americans have isolated from family members and  
41      friends, experienced challenges with economic security, and faced  
42      backlash from some who have ostracized older Americans for  
43      taking precautionary measures during the pandemic; and  
44   **WHEREAS**, The many challenges facing older Americans will remain  
45      at the forefront of challenges facing the nation, as the life  
46      expectancy of Americans has increased since 1960 from 70.1 years  
47      to 78.9 years, and is expected to further increase to 85.3 years by  
48      2060; and

1 **WHEREAS**, The month of May was first nationally designated as  
2 “Senior Citizens Month” in 1963, and in 1980, the designation was  
3 changed to “Older Americans Month,” and since that time the  
4 national celebration of the month of May as “Older Americans  
5 Month” has become a tradition; and  
6 **WHEREAS**, As a State, we need to continue our commitment to the  
7 goal of ensuring that older Americans in New Jersey enjoy active,  
8 productive, and healthy lives, and do so safely and with dignity; and  
9 **WHEREAS**, It is fitting and proper for the State of New Jersey to  
10 recognize and celebrate the contributions of older Americans and  
11 rededicate our efforts to better serve the older Americans of New  
12 Jersey; now, therefore,

13  
14 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*  
15 *State of New Jersey:*

16  
17 1. The month of May of each year is designated as “Older  
18 Americans Month” in the State of New Jersey to honor and  
19 celebrate the important contributions of older individuals, publicly  
20 recognize their continued value via vital roles in our communities,  
21 and to rededicate our efforts to ensuring older Americans lead  
22 healthy, productive, and purposeful lives.

23  
24 2. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a  
25 proclamation recognizing May as “Older Americans Month” and  
26 calling upon public officials and the residents of New Jersey to  
27 observe the month with appropriate activities and programs.

28  
29 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.  
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32 **STATEMENT**

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34 This joint resolution designates May of each year as “Older  
35 Americans Month” in New Jersey to increase the public’s  
36 awareness and understanding of the numerous contributions of New  
37 Jersey’s older Americans and to rededicate our efforts to better  
38 serve the older Americans of New Jersey.

39 The contributions and sacrifices that older Americans have made  
40 to this State and country are immeasurable. It is fitting for younger  
41 generations to show immense respect and gratitude to their elders,  
42 especially now, as society exits a pandemic that has posed unique  
43 challenges for older Americans. Whether older Americans retire in  
44 their fifties and sixties or continue working into their seventies and  
45 eighties, it is important to revere their experience, wisdom, and  
46 accomplishments in the workplace and in society. Ensuring the

**AJR56 ATKINS, CARTER**

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1 State's continued commitment to causes that help older Americans  
2 in New Jersey enjoy active, productive, and healthy lives safely and  
3 with dignity is paramount. Therefore, it is altogether fitting and  
4 proper to designate the month of May as "Older Americans Month"  
5 in New Jersey.