

P.L. 2025, Joint Resolution No. 16, *approved January 12, 2026*
Assembly Joint Resolution, No. 47 (*First Reprint*)

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating the Saturday before
2 Thanksgiving Day of each year as “National Adoption Day” and
3 designating the month of November of each year as “National
4 Adoption Month” in New Jersey.
5
6 **WHEREAS**, Around 115,000 children are adopted by American
7 families each year, including private domestic adoptions,
8 international adoptions, adoptions through the foster care system,
9 and kinship legal guardianships, and approximately two million
10 Americans have been adopted themselves; and
11 **WHEREAS**, In the United States, 400,000 children are in the foster care
12 system daily with over 600,000 passing through the system
13 annually ¹**[**, including 6,000 children in New Jersey alone¹**]**; and
14 ¹**WHEREAS**, As of December of 2024, the Division of Child Protection
15 and Permanency in the Department of Children and Families had
16 1,382 children in resource family and kinship care and 1,157
17 children in resource family and non-kinship care, totaling 2,539
18 children under the division’s care and supervision; and
19 **WHEREAS**, Throughout 2024, the division had 388 children exit out of
20 home placement into adoption, part of a total of 1,586 children
21 being discharged and exiting from the State’s foster care system;
22 and¹
23 **WHEREAS**, Children in foster care may face physical, psychological,
24 and emotional trauma throughout their lives, coupled with
25 uncertainty and anxiety as they wait to return home, find a
26 permanent home through adoption or kinship care, or to see what
27 happens next; and
28 **WHEREAS**, The ongoing opioid crisis has increased the number of
29 children entering foster care on a temporary basis, and has also
30 limited the prospect of kinship guardianships as some otherwise
31 suitable family members are disqualified for drug use; and
32 **WHEREAS**, Children whose biological parents’ rights have been
33 terminated and are waiting for adoption spend an average of two
34 and a half years in foster care before being adopted; and

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.
Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:
¹Assembly ASL committee amendments adopted December 4, 2025.

1 **WHEREAS**, Almost one half of teenagers waiting to be adopted live in
 2 congregate care rather than foster family homes, and over 20,000
 3 young people annually age out of foster care without the emotional
 4 and financial support necessary to succeed in life that a family can
 5 provide; and

6 **WHEREAS**, Since the 1990s, former Presiding Judge of Los Angeles
 7 County Michael Nash opened the court doors on Saturdays to
 8 finalize adoptions that were backlogged by bureaucratic excess and
 9 raise awareness for the thousands of children wanting for a safe,
 10 nurturing home environment; and

11 **WHEREAS**, Inspired by the initiative Judge Nash showed, county
 12 vicinages across the State of New Jersey and the country annually
 13 finalize adoptions at celebratory events in November by welcoming
 14 caregivers and children in their communities to celebrate together;
 15 and

16 **WHEREAS**, Throughout November, over 4,000 adoptions are finalized
 17 on National Adoption Day and in the weeks leading up to
 18 Thanksgiving; and

19 **WHEREAS**, Every adoption is unique, and every adoptive family has
 20 their own path and circumstances, but every adoption story begins
 21 with the compassion to love a child in need, to care for them
 22 unconditionally, and to watch them grow and prosper; and

23 **WHEREAS**, It is fitting and proper for the State of New Jersey to
 24 recognize the importance of adoption services and to celebrate the
 25 families and children that take part in this process; now, therefore,

26

27 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
 28 *State of New Jersey:*

29

30 1. The Saturday before Thanksgiving Day of each year is
 31 designated as “National Adoption Day” and the month of November
 32 of each year is designated as “National Adoption Month” in the
 33 State of New Jersey to raise public awareness of adoption services
 34 and the options available for prospective adoptive parents, and to
 35 celebrate the children and families that take part in the process by
 36 finalizing adoptions with special festivities throughout the month.

37

38 2. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a
 39 proclamation designating the Saturday before Thanksgiving Day as
 40 “National Adoption Day” and designating the month of November
 41 as “National Adoption Month” and shall call upon the public
 42 officials and citizens of this State to observe the day with
 43 appropriate activities and programs.

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45 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

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2
3 Designates Saturday before Thanksgiving Day as “National
4 Adoption Day” and designates November as “National Adoption
5 Month” in New Jersey.