

[First Reprint]

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 97

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 4, 2024

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex and Hudson)

Senator ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

SYNOPSIS

Designates last week of April of each year as “Reentry Week.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Law and Public Safety Committee on May 16, 2024, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/16/2024)

- 1 A **JOINT RESOLUTION** designating the last week in April of each
2 year as “Reentry Week.”
3
- 4 **WHEREAS**, The vast majority of ¹**[people]** individuals¹ currently
5 serving sentences in ¹**[New Jersey prisons and jails]** State and
6 county correctional facilities¹ will transition into communities
7 throughout the State when they ¹**[leave]** are released from¹
8 incarceration; and
- 9 **WHEREAS**, Formerly incarcerated individuals face numerous
10 challenges that include finding work, housing, healthcare,
11 addiction treatment, mental health ¹treatment¹, ¹and¹
12 transportation, ¹**[and]** in addition to¹ reuniting with family,
13 which can lead to recidivism¹**[,]** and¹ health, safety, and social
14 concerns; and
- 15 **WHEREAS**, Federal, State, and local leaders recognize these
16 challenges and are working on policies and programs focused on
17 removing the barriers that prevent formerly incarcerated
18 ¹**[people]** individuals¹ from pursuing healthy and productive
19 lives when they return to communities after serving time in
20 ¹**[prison or in jail]** correctional facilities¹; and
- 21 **WHEREAS**, The New Jersey Reentry Services Commission (RSC) is
22 charged with examining issues ¹**[relating]** related¹ to prisoner
23 reentry, including, but not limited to, identifying specific
24 services that are necessary for successful reentry, identifying
25 current obstacles to inmates receiving these services, and
26 proposing solutions to remove these obstacles; and
- 27 **WHEREAS**, In 2019^{1, 1} the RSC released a report that offered 100
28 practical action steps to improve the lives of those being released
29 from prison, with a focus on addiction treatment, healthcare,
30 legal issues, and employment training; and
- 31 **WHEREAS**, The Commission on Reentry Services for Women
32 (CRSW) is charged with examining issues ¹**[relating]** related¹ to
33 women prisoner reentry including, but not limited to¹**[;]** ¹
34 identifying physical and psychological hardships endured while
35 incarcerated that may impede successful reentry¹**[;]** ¹
36 identifying¹ specific services that are necessary for successful
37 reentry ¹**[;]** ¹ identifying¹ current obstacles to female prisoners
38 receiving these services¹**[;]** ¹ and proposing solutions to remove
39 these obstacles; and
- 40 **WHEREAS**, In 2020 ^{1, 1} the CRSW released a report that offered
41 more than 70 recommendations for how to improve the lives of
42 women being released ¹from incarceration¹ with a focus on

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:

¹Senate SLP committee amendments adopted May 16, 2024.

1 employment, healthcare, housing, family reunification, and
2 domestic violence; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Local reentry ¹**[councils]** organizations¹,
4 community¹**[,]**¹ and ¹**[faith based]** faith-based¹ organizations,
5 and ¹**[others]** other organizations¹ across New Jersey play key
6 roles in providing resources for formerly incarcerated ¹**[people]**
7 individuals¹; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Reentry Week provides an opportunity to raise public
9 awareness about the challenges that formerly incarcerated
10 individuals face and to encourage organizations, including State
11 agencies, to support ¹**[those]**¹ efforts ¹to provide assistance and
12 resources to formerly incarcerated individuals¹; and

13 **WHEREAS**, ¹**[Communities throughout the]** Public officials and
14 citizens of this¹ State are encouraged to observe Reentry Week
15 ¹with appropriate activities and programs¹; now, therefore,

16
17 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
18 *State of New Jersey:*

19
20 1. The last week of April of each year is designated as
21 “Reentry Week” to raise public awareness about the challenges that
22 formerly incarcerated individuals face and to encourage
23 organizations, including State agencies, to support ¹**[those]**¹ efforts
24 ¹to provide assistance and resources to formerly incarcerated
25 individuals¹.

26
27 2. The Governor may issue each year a proclamation calling
28 upon public officials and citizens of this State to observe the week
29 with appropriate activities and programs.

30
31 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.