

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 161

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 5, 2026

Sponsored by:

Senator ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

SYNOPSIS

Designates September 16 of each year as Glenn D. Cunningham Day in NJ.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating September 16 of each year as
2 Glenn D. Cunningham Day in New Jersey.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, Born on September 16, 1943, Glenn D. Cunningham was
5 raised in Jersey City, New Jersey; and
6 **WHEREAS**, Cunningham joined the United States Marine Corps after
7 high school and, while serving as a United States Marine, he also
8 served as a uniformed usher at the funeral of President John F.
9 Kennedy; and
10 **WHEREAS**, Following his military service, Cunningham returned to
11 Jersey City to serve as a police officer for 25 years, rising to the
12 rank of captain; and
13 **WHEREAS**, While serving in the Jersey City Police Department,
14 Cunningham began his political career after winning a seat on the
15 Hudson County Board of Chosen Freeholders; and
16 **WHEREAS**, Cunningham was elected to the Jersey City Council in
17 1981, and served as council president in 1985 after being re-elected;
18 and
19 **WHEREAS**, In 1987 and 1989, Cunningham ran for State Senate and
20 Mayor of Jersey City, respectively, but lost both races; and
21 **WHEREAS**, Shortly thereafter, Cunningham retired from the police
22 force and left city government to become the director of the Hudson
23 County Public Safety Office, a position he held until being selected
24 by President Bill Clinton to serve as the United States Marshal for
25 New Jersey in 1996; and
26 **WHEREAS**, After returning to elective politics as a candidate for mayor
27 of Jersey City, Cunningham made history on July 1, 2001, when he
28 was inaugurated as the first African American mayor of Jersey
29 City; and
30 **WHEREAS**, As mayor, Cunningham fought to combat drug abuse,
31 crime, and inner-city neglect and led the city as it provided
32 emergency services to many in the aftermath of the September 11
33 terrorist attacks, offering shelter and supplies to those impacted in
34 Lower Manhattan; and
35 **WHEREAS**, Since New Jersey permitted dual officeholding at the time,
36 Cunningham successfully ran for State Senate in 2003, taking office
37 as a senator for Legislative District 31 in 2004; and
38 **WHEREAS**, In addition to his public service, Cunningham was a
39 dedicated local historian and author, whose work includes historical
40 articles for The Jersey Journal and a documentary titled “Hidden
41 Footprints” chronicling slavery and the Underground Railroad in
42 Jersey City; and
43 **WHEREAS**, Just a few months after taking office as a State senator,
44 Cunningham unexpectedly passed away on May 25, 2004; and
45 **WHEREAS**, Glenn D. Cunningham was instrumental in uplifting Jersey
46 City through his commitment to public safety, economic
47 development, and community empowerment and his dedication to
48 the preservation and celebration of the city’s history; and

1 **WHEREAS**, It is altogether fitting and proper to designate September
2 16 of each year as Glenn D. Cunningham Day to honor his legacy
3 as Jersey City's first African American mayor and recognize his
4 contributions to both Jersey City and New Jersey; now, therefore,

5
6 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
7 *State of New Jersey:*

8
9 1. September 16 of each year is designated as Glenn D.
10 Cunningham Day in New Jersey to honor his legacy as Jersey City's
11 first African American mayor and recognize his contributions to
12 both Jersey City and this State.

13
14 2. The Governor is respectfully requested to issue a
15 proclamation recognizing September 16 of each year as Glenn D.
16 Cunningham Day in New Jersey.

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18 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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23 This resolution designates September 16 of each year as Glenn
24 D. Cunningham Day to honor his legacy as Jersey City's first
25 African American mayor and recognize his contributions to both
26 Jersey City and New Jersey (NJ).

27 Born on September 16, 1943, Glenn D. Cunningham was raised
28 in Jersey City, NJ. Cunningham joined the United States Marine
29 Corps after high school and, while serving as a United States
30 Marine, he also served as a uniformed usher at the funeral of
31 President John F. Kennedy. Following his military service,
32 Cunningham returned to Jersey City to serve as a police officer for
33 25 years, rising to the rank of captain.

34 While serving in the Jersey City Police Department, Cunningham
35 began his political career after winning a seat on the Hudson
36 County Board of Chosen Freeholders. Cunningham was elected to
37 the Jersey City Council in 1981, and served as council president in
38 1985 after being re-elected. In 1987 and 1989, Cunningham ran for
39 State Senate and Mayor of Jersey City, respectively, but lost both
40 races. Shortly thereafter, Cunningham retired from the police force
41 and left city government to become the director of the Hudson
42 County Public Safety Office, a position he held until being selected
43 by President Bill Clinton to serve as the United States Marshal for
44 NJ in 1996.

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46 Jersey City, Cunningham made history on July 1, 2001, when he
47 was inaugurated as the first African American mayor of Jersey City.
48 As mayor, Cunningham fought to combat drug abuse, crime, and

1 inner-city neglect and led the city as it provided emergency services
2 to many in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks,
3 offering shelter and supplies to those impacted in Lower Manhattan.
4 Since NJ permitted dual officeholding at the time, Cunningham
5 successfully ran for State Senate in 2003, taking office as a senator
6 for Legislative District 31 in 2004.

7 In addition to his public service, Cunningham was a dedicated
8 local historian and author, whose work includes historical articles
9 for The Jersey Journal and a documentary titled “Hidden
10 Footprints” chronicling slavery and the Underground Railroad in
11 Jersey City. Just a few months after taking office as a State senator,
12 Cunningham unexpectedly passed on May 25, 2004. Glenn D.
13 Cunningham was instrumental in uplifting Jersey City through his
14 commitment to public safety, economic development, and
15 community empowerment and his dedication to the preservation
16 and celebration of the city’s history.