

# ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 203

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY

### 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED DECEMBER 5, 2022

**Sponsored by:**

Assemblyman **ROBERT J. KARABINCHAK**

District 18 (Middlesex)

Assemblyman **STERLEY S. STANLEY**

District 18 (Middlesex)

**Co-Sponsored by:**

Assemblyman **Benson**

**SYNOPSIS**

Designates January of each year as “Hindu Heritage Month” in New Jersey.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/7/2023)

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating January of each year as “Hindu  
2 Heritage Month” in New Jersey.  
3  
4 **WHEREAS**, Hinduism is the world’s oldest religion, dating back to a  
5 time between 3000-8000 BCE; and  
6 **WHEREAS**, Among many practices, Hindus believe in karma,  
7 reincarnation, non-violence, and the spiritual nature of living  
8 beings; and  
9 **WHEREAS**, Hindus believe in a divine higher power that takes form in  
10 many deities, such as Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Ganesha, Devi,  
11 Krishna, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Durga and Kali; and  
12 **WHEREAS**, There are many holidays celebrated throughout the year in  
13 which Hindus honor various deities, but the most well-known in the  
14 United States are Diwali and Holi; and  
15 **WHEREAS**, Diwali, the Festival of Lights, celebrates Lakshmi, who is  
16 the goddess representing wealth and good fortune; and  
17 **WHEREAS**, Holi, the Festival of Colors, is a holiday that honors the  
18 beginning of spring, in which bonfires are lit and colored paste and  
19 water is thrown on those celebrating; and  
20 **WHEREAS**, Hindus have made enormous contributions to cultural  
21 development throughout history, including significant achievements  
22 in math, science, and medicine used in the modern world; and  
23 **WHEREAS**, There are over 1.1 billion Hindus in the world; and  
24 **WHEREAS**, About three percent of New Jersey’s population is Hindu,  
25 making New Jersey the state with the highest percentage in the  
26 United States; and  
27 **WHEREAS**, The largest Hindu temple in the world, called BAPS Shri  
28 Swaminarayan Mandir, is located in Robbinsville, New Jersey; and  
29 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey has a large and vibrant Hindu community that  
30 deserves recognition for their rich and noteworthy history and  
31 cultural contributions to this State; now, therefore,

32  
33 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*  
34 *State of New Jersey:*

- 35  
36 1. The month of January of each year is designated as “Hindu  
37 Heritage Month” in the State of New Jersey.  
38  
39 2. The Governor is requested to annually issue a proclamation  
40 calling on the public officials and citizens of this State to observe  
41 “Hindu Heritage Month” with appropriate activities and programs.  
42  
43 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.  
44

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46 **STATEMENT**

47  
48 This joint resolution designates January of each year as “Hindu

1 Heritage Month” in the State of New Jersey in recognition of the  
2 many Hindu residents of this State and their rich and noteworthy  
3 history and cultural contributions to this State.

4 Hinduism is the oldest religion in the world, dating back to a  
5 time between 3000-8000 BCE. Sacred texts have been passed on  
6 through generations for thousands of years, creating a strong  
7 following of 1.1 billion Hindus in the 21st century. Hindus believe  
8 in a variety of deities, each representing different concepts and  
9 values within Hinduism. Different sects of Hindus emphasize  
10 particular deities and practices over others, depending on their  
11 beliefs. Various Hindu gods and goddesses can be traced to origin  
12 points spanning several thousand years, making the traditions  
13 surrounding Hinduism and the Hindu deities rich and storied. Some  
14 deities have holidays celebrated in their honor, such as Diwali, the  
15 Festival of Lights, which celebrates Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth  
16 and fortune. Another well-known Hindu holiday is Holi, the  
17 Festival of Colors. It is a holiday celebrating the coming of spring,  
18 famous for colorful paste and water thrown on those celebrating.

19 Hindus have made enormous contributions to cultural  
20 development throughout history across the globe. Significant  
21 achievements in math, science, and medicine used in the modern  
22 world can be traced to Hindus. New Jersey is lucky enough to be  
23 the state with the highest percentage of Hindu residents in the  
24 United States. The Hindu community has shown others the beauty  
25 of their beliefs, including through the establishment of the largest  
26 Hindu temple in the world, now located in Robbinsville, New  
27 Jersey.