

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 161**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman RONALD S. DANCER

District 12 (Burlington, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean)

SYNOPSIS

Condemns terrorist attack on New Jersey native Jay Austin and Lauren Geoghegan by Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



ACR161 DANCER

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1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** condemning the terrorist attack on
2 New Jersey native Jay Austin and Lauren Geoghegan by the
3 Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.
4
5 **WHEREAS**, Jay Austin, a Manalapan New Jersey native, and his
6 companion Lauren Geoghegan were the victims of a terrorist attack
7 while biking on a road in southwest Tajikistan on July 29, 2018
8 when a sedan, containing Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS)
9 militants, purposely drove into them; and
10 **WHEREAS**, Mr. Austin, Ms. Geoghegan, and several other fellow
11 cyclists from Switzerland and the Netherlands all lost their lives in
12 the attack; and
13 **WHEREAS**, Soon after the attack, ISIS released a video of the attackers
14 posing in front of an ISIS flag and vowing to kill “disbelievers”;
15 and
16 **WHEREAS**, Prior to their tragic and violent deaths, Mr. Austin and Ms.
17 Geoghegan both lived extraordinary lives; and
18 **WHEREAS**, After obtaining a master’s degree from Georgetown
19 University, Mr. Austin dedicated himself to public service, working
20 at the United States Department of Housing and Urban
21 Development; and
22 **WHEREAS**, Focusing on relationships and experience, rather than
23 accumulating possessions, Mr. Austin repeatedly sought out
24 adventure through travel; and
25 **WHEREAS**, Similarly, Ms. Geoghegan attended Georgetown
26 University, where she later worked at the admission’s office and
27 like Mr. Austin had a passion for international travel; and
28 **WHEREAS**, Their shared enthusiasm for travel culminated in their most
29 ambitious adventure: a cross country, years long, overseas bike trip
30 that ultimately spanned multiple countries as diverse as South
31 Africa, Morocco, Spain, and France; and
32 **WHEREAS**, Through various challenges, such as extreme weather and
33 illness, Mr. Austin wrote that he and Ms. Geoghegan were always
34 able to rely on the kind acts of strangers to help them through the
35 difficulties they encountered on their journey; and
36 **WHEREAS**, The couple’s positive outlook and enthusiasm for life, like
37 that of so many other victims of terrorism, makes this attack
38 especially tragic; and
39 **WHEREAS**, The New Jersey Legislature condemns this heinous act of
40 violence, which constitutes an affront to American values of
41 tolerance and freedom, values embodied, and expressed so
42 eloquently, by Mr. Austin and Ms. Geoghegan; now, therefore,
43
44 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the General Assembly of the State of New*
45 *Jersey (the Senate concurring):*

1 1. The New Jersey Legislature condemns the terrorist attack on
2 New Jersey native Jay Austin and Lauren Geoghegan by the Islamic
3 State in Iraq and Syria.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate or the Clerk of the General Assembly to the President of the United States, the United States Secretary of State, the Governor of the State of New Jersey, and to each member of Congress elected from this State.

12 STATEMENT

14 This resolution condemns the terrorist attack on Jay Austin and
15 Lauren Geoghegan by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

16 Jay Austin, a Manalapan New Jersey native, and his companion
17 Lauren Geoghegan were the victims of a terrorist attack while
18 biking on a road in southwest Tajikistan on July 29, 2018 when a
19 sedan, containing Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) militants,
20 purposely drove into them. Mr. Austin, Ms. Geoghegan, and
21 several other fellow cyclists lost their lives in the attack. ISIS
22 claimed responsibility for the attack, releasing a video of the
23 attackers posing in front of an ISIS flag and vowing to kill
24 “disbelievers.”

Before their deaths, Mr. Austin and Ms. Geoghegan both attended Georgetown University. After graduating, Mr. Austin worked at the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Ms. Geoghegan worked for the admissions office at Georgetown University. Their shared passion for international travel culminated in an overseas, multi-year bike trip, spanning countries as diverse as South Africa, Morocco, Spain, and France. Mr. Austin wrote that he and Ms. Geoghegan were always able to rely on the kind acts of strangers to help them through the difficulties they encountered on their journey. The couple's positive outlook and enthusiasm for life, like that of so many other victims of terrorism, makes this attack especially tragic.

37 The New Jersey Legislature condemns this heinous act of
38 violence, which constitutes an affront to American values of
39 tolerance and freedom, values embodied, and expressed so
40 eloquently, by Mr. Austin and Ms. Geoghegan.