

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 101

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 20, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman PARKER SPACE

District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)

SYNOPSIS

Designates last full weekend in August each year as “New Jersey Bat Night Out.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating the last full weekend in August
2 of each year as “New Jersey Bat Night Out.”
3

4 **WHEREAS**, “International Bat Night” has taken place every year since
5 1997 on the last full weekend of August in more than 30 countries,
6 and involves events to educate the public on the lives and habitat
7 needs of bats; and

8 **WHEREAS**, While some people may view bats as spooky or dangerous,
9 bats are important indicators of a healthy environment and are the
10 only major predators of nocturnal insects; and

11 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey is home to nine species of bats -- the little
12 brown bat, big brown bat, northern long-eared bat, small-footed
13 myotis, Eastern pipistrel, Indiana bat, hoary bat, red bat, and silver-
14 haired bat, and they are protected under “The Endangered and
15 Nongame Species Conservation Act”; and

16 **WHEREAS**, Hoary, red, and silver-haired bats are part-time residents
17 that are found in the State from spring through fall, migrating to
18 southern states in the fall to overwinter in a milder climate, while
19 the other six species remain here throughout the year and require
20 special habitats for winter hibernation; and

21 **WHEREAS**, Natural caves once provided hibernating habitat for bats,
22 but today most natural caves are subject to disturbance by people,
23 and thus are not suitable for use by bats, and abandoned mines and
24 tunnels have replaced natural caves as the primary winter habitat
25 for bats in many parts of the country; and

26 **WHEREAS**, The Indiana bat is designated as a State and federally
27 endangered species due to the disturbance or alteration of
28 hibernation sites and roosting places by human activities; and

29 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey's largest known bat hibernaculum is the
30 Hibernia Mine located in the Wildcat Ridge Wildlife Management
31 Area in Morris County; and

32 **WHEREAS**, The first record of bats using the Hibernia Mine is from the
33 1930s, and while once home to over 30,000 hibernating bats,
34 including a small number of Indiana bats, the population has been
35 decimated by white-nose syndrome, a deadly fungus that affects
36 hibernating bats; and

37 **WHEREAS**, Bats rely on certain food sources and certain habitats in
38 order to survive, and protecting their natural habitats from
39 disturbance, especially during hibernation and the raising of young,
40 is a key factor in maintaining healthy bat populations; and

41 **WHEREAS**, Because bats are particularly vulnerable to pollution and
42 pesticides, the presence or absence of bats can provide scientists
43 with information on the overall health of the local environment; and

44 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey's bat species are insectivorous and can
45 consume thousands of insects in a single night helping to reduce
46 agricultural crop pests, mosquitos, and the need for pesticides; and

47 **WHEREAS**, Because of the issues affecting the health of the country's
48 bat population and the importance of bats to the agricultural

1 industry, it is altogether fitting and proper to take steps to dispel the
2 misconceptions associated with bats and to increase public
3 awareness of the benefits of bats; now, therefore,

4

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

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8 1. The last full weekend in August of each year is designated as
9 “New Jersey Bat Night Out.”

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11 2. The Governor may annually issue a proclamation calling
12 upon public officials and citizens of the State to observe “New
13 Jersey Bat Night Out” with appropriate activities and programs.

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15 3. The Department of Environmental Protection shall take
16 appropriate measures each year to publicize “New Jersey Bat Night
17 Out” and highlight the importance of bats to the environment and
18 the agricultural industry.

19

20 4. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

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23 STATEMENT

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25 This resolution designates the last full weekend in August of
26 each year as “New Jersey Bat Night Out.” “International Bat
27 Night” has taken place every year since 1997 on the last full
28 weekend of August in more than 30 countries, and involves events
29 to educate the public on the lives and habitat needs of bats. The
30 resolution directs the Department of Environmental Protection to
31 take appropriate measures each year to publicize “New Jersey Bat
32 Night Out” and highlight the importance of bats to the environment
33 and the agricultural industry.

34 New Jersey is home to nine species of bats, all of which are
35 protected by “The Endangered and Nongame Species Conservation
36 Act.” Six species, including the Indiana bat – designated as a State
37 and federal endangered species – are year-round residents, and three
38 species are migratory.

39 Bats are important indicators of a healthy environment. Since
40 they are particularly vulnerable to pollution and pesticides, the
41 presence or absence of bats can provide scientists with information
42 on the overall health of the local environment. New Jersey’s bat
43 species are insectivorous and can consume thousands of insects in a
44 single night, helping to reduce agricultural crop pests, mosquitos,
45 and the use of pesticides.