

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 103

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 20, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman JOHN F. MCKEON

District 27 (Essex and Morris)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman Swain

SYNOPSIS

Designates April 22 each year as "Personal Carbon Footprint Awareness Day."

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/20/2021)

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating April 22 each year as "Personal
2 Carbon Footprint Awareness Day."
3
4 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey's long coastline and low elevation mean that it
5 will be one of the states most affected by climate change; and
6 **WHEREAS**, Although each person's individual contribution to
7 greenhouse gas production may be small, the cumulative effect of
8 small behavior changes by millions of New Jerseyans would be
9 significant; and
10 **WHEREAS**, There are habits that citizens of the State could easily
11 adopt today that would reduce their carbon footprint, which is a
12 measure of the net amount of greenhouse gases that are released as
13 result of a person's energy use, transportation, consumption, and
14 other actions; and
15 **WHEREAS**, Transportation has recently surpassed electricity
16 generation as the top source of greenhouse gases, so walking and
17 biking more, taking public transportation, switching to an electric
18 car, and simply driving less aggressively are effective ways of
19 reducing one's personal carbon footprint; and
20 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey's "Electric Discount and Energy Competition
21 Act," enacted in 1999, allows consumers to choose their electricity
22 supplier, and switching to a supplier that uses renewable sources of
23 electricity may be an option for many citizens of the State; and
24 **WHEREAS**, Eliminating drafts in one's home by adding weather-
25 stripping to doors and caulk to windows, adding insulation,
26 switching to LED light bulbs, and turning down the heat and air-
27 conditioning when the home is unoccupied will reduce electricity
28 and gas usage, and the associated greenhouse gas emissions, and
29 will also save money; and
30 **WHEREAS**, Cutting down on meat consumption is also an easy way to
31 reduce one's personal carbon footprint, and, according to a study by
32 researchers at Carnegie Mellon University, eating just one
33 vegetarian meal per week for a year makes the same difference in
34 greenhouse gas emissions as driving 1,000 fewer miles; and
35 **WHEREAS**, Using more reusable items—such as thermoses, durable
36 plastic or glass food containers, and reusable shopping bags—and
37 fewer single-use items also uses less energy and can reduce
38 pollution caused by littering; and
39 **WHEREAS**, Food waste generates methane emissions as it decomposes
40 in landfills, so reducing the amount of food that one wastes—as
41 well as composting household vegetable waste—can reduce the
42 emissions of this potent greenhouse gas; and
43 **WHEREAS**, It is appropriate for the citizens of the State to celebrate
44 April 22, which is "Earth Day," by examining how they can make a
45 small change in their habits to combat climate change; and
46 **WHEREAS**, April 22, 2020 marks the 50th anniversary of "Earth Day,"
47 which in 1970 helped to raise public awareness of the
48 environmental causes of public health problems, and the theme of

1 the 2020 "Earth Day" is climate action, making this an ideal year to
2 take time to consider one's personal carbon footprint; and

3 **WHEREAS**, It is fitting and proper for the Legislature to designate
4 "Earth Day," April 22 of each year, as "Personal Carbon Footprint
5 Awareness Day;" now, therefore,

6

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

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10 1. April 22 of each year is designated as "Personal Carbon
11 Footprint Awareness Day," in order to encourage the citizens of the
12 State to reduce their carbon footprints.

13

14 2. The Governor is respectfully requested to issue a
15 proclamation each year calling upon public officials and the citizens
16 of this State to observe "Personal Carbon Footprint Awareness Day"
17 with appropriate activities and programs.

18

19 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

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22 STATEMENT

23

24 This joint resolution would designate "Earth Day," April 22 of
25 each year, as "Personal Carbon Footprint Awareness Day" in New
26 Jersey. Although each person's individual contribution to
27 greenhouse gas production may be small, the cumulative effect of
28 small behavior changes by millions of New Jerseyans would be
29 significant, and this resolution would encourage New Jerseyans to
30 spend April 22 reflecting on ways in which they can reduce their
31 person carbon footprints.