

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 151

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY

District 7 (Burlington)

SYNOPSIS

Designates month of March as “Military and Law Enforcement Working Dogs Month.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating the month of March as “Military
2 and Law Enforcement Working Dogs Month.”
3
4 **WHEREAS**, Military and law enforcement working dogs play an
5 important role in protecting our nation from both foreign and
6 domestic threats; and
7 **WHEREAS**, Military working dogs were initially selected from seven
8 breeds: German Shepherds, Belgian Sheep Dogs, Doberman
9 Pinschers, Collies, Siberian Huskies, Alaskan Malamutes, and
10 Eskimo Dogs and underwent basic training for two to three months
11 before moving into specialized programs to train for work as either
12 sentry dogs, patrol dogs, messenger dogs, or mine-detection dogs;
13 and
14 **WHEREAS**, Nearly 16,000 dogs have served in the armed forces since
15 World War II and have played a critical role in saving lives and
16 preventing battlefield injuries to American service members; and
17 **WHEREAS**, Dogs offer significant advantages to humans as they
18 possess superior vision, powerful sense of smell, and can subdue or
19 intimidate the enemy with the use of non-lethal force; and
20 **WHEREAS**, Dogs also exhibit a number of personality traits that make
21 them particularly suitable for military service such as intelligence,
22 loyalty, dependability, and adaptability; and
23 **WHEREAS**, Law enforcement recognized the advantages dogs could
24 provide in conducting their own operations and enlisted the help of
25 working dogs beginning in the 1970s; and
26 **WHEREAS**, In their law enforcement role, working dogs perform
27 similar tasks to their military counterparts by assisting in the
28 apprehension of suspects; detection of drugs, explosives, or other
29 evidence in a criminal investigation; and performance of search and
30 rescue operations during bombings, natural disasters, or missing
31 persons cases; and
32 **WHEREAS**, The task of becoming the handler for a working dog
33 requires substantial training which focuses on obedience,
34 aggression control, tracking, searching, detection of dangerous
35 materials, and proper care of a dog’s overall well-being; and
36 **WHEREAS**, Working dogs and their handlers are hardworking and
37 courageous individuals who willingly place their own lives at risk
38 in order to ensure the safety and security of our citizens each and
39 every day; and
40 **WHEREAS**, March 13th is “National K9 Veterans Day” which
41 commemorates the service and sacrifice of all working dogs
42 because on March 13, 1942, the United States Army began its War
43 Dog Program, or the “K9 Corps,” to formally train dogs for military
44 use; now, therefore,
45
46 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
47 *State of New Jersey:*

AJR151 MURPHY

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1. The month of March is designated as “Military and Law Enforcement Working Dogs Month” in the State of New Jersey to honor the service and sacrifice of military and law enforcement working dogs and their handlers.

2. The Governor is respectfully requested to issue an annual proclamation calling upon public officials and citizens of this State to observe “Military and Law Enforcement Working Dogs Month” with appropriate activities and programs.

3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This resolution designates the month of March as “Military and Law Enforcement Working Dogs Month” to honor the service and sacrifice of military and law enforcement working dogs and their handlers. The resolution also respectfully requests that the Governor issue an annual proclamation calling upon public officials and citizens of this State to engage in appropriate activities and programs throughout the month of March.

Military and law enforcement working dogs continue to play an important role in protecting our nation from both foreign and domestic threats. Although dogs had been used by the military for quite some time, the month of March marks the first time a formal dog-training program was established by the United States Army. March 13th is known as “National K9 Veterans Day” because on March 13, 1942, the United States Army announced creation of the War Dog Program or the “K-9 Corps.” Dogs from a number of acceptable breeds including German Shepherds, Belgian Sheep Dogs, Doberman Pinschers, Collies, Siberian Huskies, Alaskan Malamutes, and Eskimo Dogs underwent basic obedience training before entering one of four specialized programs focusing on either sentry work, scouting, messaging, or mine detection. Since then, over 16,000 dogs have served in armed conflicts overseas and have played a critical role saving lives and preventing battlefield injuries to American service members.

The Army's decision to train dogs for military purposes was done after organizations like the American Kennel Club formed "Dogs for Defense," a civilian organization whose mission was to train dogs to perform sentry duties along the coastal United States. After becoming aware of this program and recognizing the strategic advantages dogs could provide, Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson approved formation of the K-9 Corps. Dogs possess a number of character traits, such as intelligence, loyalty, dependability, and adaptability, which make them particularly suited for military use. In addition, dogs have strong vision,

1 powerful sense of smell, and can subdue enemy combatants with the
2 use of non-lethal force.

3 After successful launch of the K-9 Corps, local law enforcement
4 began using working dogs to help in their own operations beginning
5 in the 1970s. These dogs were used to assist in the apprehension of
6 suspects; detection of drugs, explosives, or other evidence in a
7 criminal investigation; and performance of search and rescue
8 operations during bombings, natural disasters, or missing persons
9 cases.

10 Not every dog is suitable for a role with military or law
11 enforcement. Those selected to participate in a training program
12 join an elite group of dogs that have exhibited proper temperament
13 and decision making abilities. Today, German Shepherds are
14 considered the most suitable for training programs because they
15 consistently display the proper combination of intelligence,
16 dependability, predictability, and adaptability.

17 Unleashing the potential of a working dog to carry out military
18 and law enforcement objectives would not be possible without their
19 handlers. Similar to the animals they work with, handlers go
20 through a rigorous training program integrating classroom
21 instruction, first aid, and real world simulations. This curriculum
22 leaves them able to understand how a canine learns new behaviors,
23 how to care for a dog, and how to operate with a dog in different
24 environments.

25 The State of New Jersey is proud to recognize the contributions
26 of this extraordinary group of military and law enforcement
27 personnel by dedicating a month in their honor.