# ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION
# No. 16

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY
## 219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**
**Assemblyman ROBERT AUTH**
**District 39 (Bergen and Passaic)**
**Assemblyman RAJ MUKHERJI**
**District 33 (Hudson)**
**Assemblywoman BETTYLOU DECROCE**
**District 26 (Essex, Morris and Passaic)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**
**Assemblyman Kennedy, Assemblywomen Chaparro, Jimenez, Assemblymen Wirths, Space, Assemblywoman N.Munoz, Assemblyman Benson, Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttle, Assemblyman Zwicker, Assemblywoman Quijano, Assemblymen Holley, Armato, Mazzeo, Chiaravalloti, Calabrese and Assemblywoman DiMaso**

**SYNOPSIS**

Designates October 23rd of each year as Beirut Barracks Bombing Remembrance Day in New Jersey.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.

**A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating October 23rd of each year as Beirut Barracks Bombing Remembrance Day in the State of New Jersey.

**WHEREAS,** Early on the morning of October 23, 1983, a 19-ton Mercedes-Benz truck went through a five-foot high concertina wire fence and into the entryway of a four-story barracks building at Beirut International Airport housing several hundred United States Armed Forces personnel; and

**WHEREAS,** A suicide bomber, later identified as an Iranian national named Ismail Ascari, detonated an explosive charge later estimated to be equivalent to 21,000 pounds of TNT, which lifted the building off the ground and caused it to collapse in a mound of gray, smoking rubble; and

**WHEREAS,** When the dust settled, 220 United States Marines, members of the 1st Battalion, 8th Marines-Battalion Landing Team, had been killed, making the day the deadliest for the Marine Corps since the Battle of Iwo Jima in February 1945, during World War II; and

**WHEREAS,** In addition, 18 Navy sailors and three Army soldiers were killed, and more than 100 other American military personnel were injured; and

**WHEREAS,** Within 10 minutes of the attack, and not far from the airport, another suicide bomber in an explosive-packed truck targeted a nine-story building housing soldiers from the 3rd Company of France's Parachute Chasseur Regiment and killed 58 paratroopers; and

**WHEREAS,** An unknown group calling itself Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the bombings, though it was later established that the Iranian- and Syrian-sponsored paramilitary force Hezbollah had organized the attacks; and

**WHEREAS,** The United States had deployed the Marines to Lebanon in 1982 as part of a multi-national security force to oversee a ceasefire brokered between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, but when Lebanon's civil war reignited in September of that year, American military forces found themselves in the middle of a raging sectarian conflict; and

**WHEREAS,** The Beirut bombings were later recognized as the start of the upswing in terrorism that has grown steadily worse over the last three decades and has resulted in what is now known as the Global War on Terror; and

**WHEREAS,** In May 2003, a federal district court in the District of Columbia ruled that Hezbollah had carried out the attack at the direction of the Iranian government and as compensation awarded the victims of the bombings and their families more than $10 billion in damages from Iran, though little of that money has been collected; and

**WHEREAS,** In the years since the bombings, the tragic event has been memorialized by the Beirut Memorial established at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and memorials at the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, Penn's Landing, Philadelphia, Boston, Massachusetts, and Florida; and

**WHEREAS,** It is fitting and proper that this State join the list of jurisdictions remembering the events of October 23, 1983 and the 241 members of the Armed Forces of the United States who died on that day by establishing a special remembrance day in the State of New Jersey; now, therefore,

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

1. October 23rd of each year is designated as Beirut Barracks Bombing Remembrance Day in the State of New Jersey.

2. The Governor shall annually issue a proclamation and call upon public officials, private organizations, and all citizens of this State to observe this remembrance each year with appropriate events and activities.

3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This Joint Resolution designates October 23rd of each year as Beirut Barracks Bombing Remembrance Day in the State of New Jersey.