

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 184

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED AUGUST 25, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman JON M. BRAMNICK

District 21 (Morris, Somerset and Union)

SYNOPSIS

Designates Tuesday in third full week of September each year as “Food Allergy and Hunger Awareness Day.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating the Tuesday of the third week of
2 September of each year as "Food Allergy and Hunger Awareness
3 Day" in New Jersey.

4

5 **WHEREAS**, Hunger is a complex problem that has been determined to
6 lead to wide-ranging, detrimental consequences affecting the
7 physical and mental health of many Americans; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Many of the consequences that emerge due to hunger arise
9 from the intersection between food insecurity, food allergies, and
10 other restrictions on food choice or availability; and

11 **WHEREAS**, Food insecurity is defined as the state of being without
12 reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food,
13 and, at some time over the course of a year, having difficulty
14 providing enough food for all of the members of one's family due
15 to a lack of resources; and

16 **WHEREAS**, Food insecurity and food allergies are harmful to people of
17 all age groups, but are particularly devastating to children, as both
18 threaten proper nutrition which is vital to a child's physical and
19 mental health, academic achievement, and future economic
20 prosperity; and

21 **WHEREAS**, According to NJ Spotlight in September 2019, it is
22 estimated that 17.9 million households in the United States are food
23 insecure; and

24 **WHEREAS**, An additional 6.8 million households in the United States
25 have very low food security, where some household members
26 reduce their food intake to provide food for other household
27 members and normal eating patterns for household members are
28 disrupted at times during the year due to limited resources; and

29 **WHEREAS**, In New Jersey in 2019 at least 1.15 million residents were
30 identified as food insecure, including 375,000 children, but many
31 do not qualify for federal nutrition programs and rely on local food
32 pantries for assistance; and

33 **WHEREAS**, Currently, at least 900,000 New Jersey residents rely for
34 assistance on food pantries and the food banks that supply them;
35 and

36 **WHEREAS**, During the Covid-19 pandemic, the financial pressures on
37 families' ability to afford healthy food and the stress on many
38 household's economic resources have multiplied exponentially, as
39 at least 42 percent of New Jersey residents report that someone in
40 their household has been laid off from work; and

41 **WHEREAS**, Roughly one in ten people in New Jersey have food
42 allergies; and

43 **WHEREAS**, Allergy-friendly foods are often more expensive, for
44 example, gluten-free foods cost, on average, 159 percent more than
45 foods that are not sold as gluten-free; and

46 **WHEREAS**, Approximately 40 percent of children with food allergies
47 are allergic to more than one food, making it difficult for their
48 families to find and afford safe food; and

AJR184 BRAMNICK

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1 **WHEREAS**, Due in part to a lack of awareness, there is limited funding
2 for studies, aid programs, and assistance to specialty food banks to
3 address food allergies as part of the problem of hunger and food
4 insecurity in the State; now, therefore,

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

9 1. The Tuesday of the third full week of September each year
10 shall be designated in New Jersey as "Food Allergy and Hunger
11 Awareness Day" to bring awareness to the complex problems of
12 food insecurity and hunger in the State and to call for more
13 attention to the specific challenges that food allergies and other
14 restrictions add to these problems for food-insecure families.

2. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a proclamation, calling upon public officials and the citizens of the State to observe "Food Allergy and Hunger Awareness Day" with appropriate activities and programs and to coordinate the activities and programs with those annually planned for "New Jersey Gleaning Week," established pursuant to Assembly Joint Resolution No. 93 of 2014-2015, and "Hunger Action Month," established pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution No. 17 of 2014-2015.

25 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

30 This joint resolution permanently designates the Tuesday of the
31 third full week of September as "Food Allergy and Hunger
32 Awareness Day" in New Jersey.

Food allergies affect roughly one out of every 10 people in New Jersey, and approximately 40 percent of children with food allergies are allergic to more than one food, making it even harder for their families to find and afford safe food. These challenges compound the problem of hunger and food insecurity in the State, where at least 1.15 million residents in 2019 were identified as food insecure. Food insecurity is defined as the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food, and, at some time over the course of a year, having difficulty providing enough food for all of the members of one's family due to a lack of resources. "Food Allergy and Hunger Awareness Day" seeks to raise awareness and promote education about the complex intersection between food allergies, hunger and food insecurity.