ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION
No. 67

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 3, 2020

Sponsored by:
Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY
District 7 (Burlington)
Assemblyman NICHOLAS CHIARAVALLOTI
District 31 (Hudson)
Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE
District 37 (Bergen)

Co-Sponsored by:
Assemblyman Caputo

SYNOPSIS

Designates month of September each year as "Deaf Awareness Month" in New Jersey; designates last full week of September each year as "Deaf Awareness Week" in New Jersey.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/13/2020)

A JOINT RESOLUTION designating the month of September each year as "Deaf Awareness Month" in New Jersey and designating the last full week of September each year as "Deaf Awareness Week" in New Jersey.

WHEREAS, Approximately one out of every 1,000 children in the United States is born with profound hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, There are approximately 850,000 New Jersey residents with varying degrees of hearing loss ranging from mild to profound, including individuals who are born deaf and people who encounter late-stage hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey is home to many world-class institutions and programs for people who are deaf, including the Union Street School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Hackensack, the Bruce Street School for the Deaf in Newark, and the Marie Katzenbach School for the Deaf in Trenton; and

WHEREAS, Linda Bove, famous for her role as "Linda the Librarian" on Sesame Street is a New Jersey native, having been born in Garfield and educated at the Marie Katzenbach School; and

WHEREAS, There are many misconceptions about being deaf and the challenges people who are deaf face in their everyday lives, which can only be dispelled through greater public education and awareness; and

WHEREAS, People who are deaf communicate using sign language, which is a fully fledged natural language with its own morphology, syntax, and structure; and

WHEREAS, People who are deaf can work in almost any job and the main barriers to employment arise from inaccessible work environments rather than an inability to hear; and

WHEREAS, Much work remains to be done to promote the rights of people who are deaf throughout the world, including access to education, access to information and services, and the prevalence of sign language; and

WHEREAS, Governments around the world have designated September as "Deaf Awareness Month," in order to commemorate the first World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf, which took place in September 1951; and

WHEREAS, It is proper and fitting for the State of New Jersey to celebrate the culture, heritage, and language of people who are deaf and to increase public awareness of deaf issues by designating the month of September as "Deaf Awareness Month" and the last full week of September as "Deaf Awareness Week" in New Jersey; now, therefore,

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

1. In order to celebrate the culture, heritage, and language of people who are deaf, and to increase public awareness of deaf issues:

a. The month of September each year is designated as "Deaf Awareness Month" in New Jersey.

b. The last full week of September each year is designated as "Deaf Awareness Week" in New Jersey.

c. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a proclamation calling upon public officials and the citizens of the State to observe "Deaf Awareness Month" and "Deaf Awareness Week" with appropriate activities and programs.

2. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This resolution designates the month of September as "Deaf Awareness Month" and the last full week of September as "Deaf Awareness Week" in New Jersey.

There are approximately 850,000 New Jersey residents with varying degrees of hearing loss ranging from mild to profound, including individuals who are born deaf and people who encounter late-stage hearing loss. New Jersey is also home to many world-class institutions and programs for people who are deaf, including the Union Street School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Hackensack, the Bruce Street School for the Deaf in Newark, and the Marie Katzenbach School for the Deaf in Trenton.

There are many misconceptions about being deaf and the challenges people who are deaf face in their everyday lives, which can only be dispelled through greater public education and awareness. Furthermore, much work remains to be done to promote the rights of people who are deaf throughout the world, including access to education, access to information and services, and the prevalence of sign language.

Governments around the world have designated September as "Deaf Awareness Month," in order to commemorate the first World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf, which took place in September 1951. It is therefore proper and fitting for the State of New Jersey to celebrate the culture, heritage, and language of people who are deaf and to increase public awareness of deaf issues by designating the month of September as "Deaf Awareness Month" and the last full week of September as "Deaf Awareness Week" in New Jersey.