

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 79

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 3, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman JOHN F. MCKEON

District 27 (Essex and Morris)

Assemblywoman MILA M. JASEY

District 27 (Essex and Morris)

SYNOPSIS

Designates week of March 18 of each year as “President Grover Cleveland Week” in NJ.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/3/2020)

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating the week of March 18 of each
2 year as “President Grover Cleveland Week” in New Jersey.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, Stephen Grover Cleveland was born at home on March 18,
5 1837, in the borough of Caldwell, New Jersey, the site of which is
6 listed on the National Register of Historic Places; and
7 **WHEREAS**, Despite a tumultuous upbringing in western New York,
8 which caused Cleveland to leave school multiple times, he managed
9 to study law and was admitted to the New York bar in 1859; and
10 **WHEREAS**, In 1881, after relocating to the city of Buffalo, Cleveland
11 was recruited by the Democratic Party to oppose the corruption that
12 plagued the city, winning a decisive victory in the mayoral election
13 over the Republican challenger; and
14 **WHEREAS**, Cleveland’s anti-corruption stance drew major attention
15 across the state and, in 1882, Cleveland entered and won the
16 governor’s race for New York; and
17 **WHEREAS**, Continuing his tradition of anti-corruption, Cleveland
18 entered the 1884 presidential election and defeated Republican
19 challenger and former Secretary of State James G. Blaine; and
20 **WHEREAS**, During his first term in office, President Cleveland
21 abandoned the traditional “spoils system,” which awarded jobs to
22 supporters of the president rather than those most qualified; and
23 **WHEREAS**, President Cleveland lost the highly disputed presidential
24 election of 1888 to challenger Benjamin Harrison due, in part, to
25 the election fraud in Indiana, a crucial swing state; and
26 **WHEREAS**, President Cleveland remained dedicated to national issues
27 and, in 1891, drafted a letter concerning silver which thrust him
28 back into the national spotlight; and
29 **WHEREAS**, Building off the momentum from the letter, President
30 Cleveland launched a successful challenge against President
31 Harrison in 1892 and became the first, and only, president to serve
32 two, non-consecutive terms; and
33 **WHEREAS**, After completing his second term in office, President
34 Cleveland retired to his home, Westland Mansion, in Princeton,
35 New Jersey, which is also listed on the National Register of
36 Historic Places; and
37 **WHEREAS**, President Cleveland remained committed to service in
38 retirement as both a trustee for Princeton University and occasional
39 consultant to President Theodore Roosevelt; and
40 **WHEREAS**, President Cleveland died on June 24, 1908, and is interred
41 at the Princeton Cemetery of the Nassau Presbyterian Church; and
42 **WHEREAS**, His legacy as the only president to be born in New Jersey
43 persists, with the Grover Cleveland Middle School in his birthplace
44 of Caldwell, New Jersey and his induction into the New Jersey Hall
45 of Fame in 2013; and
46 **WHEREAS**, Residents of the State of New Jersey would benefit from
47 increased awareness of its presidential heritage in the life of
48 President Grover Cleveland; and

AJR79 MCKEON, JASEY

3

1 **WHEREAS**, It is altogether fitting and proper that the State of New
2 Jersey honor the legacy of President Grover Cleveland by
3 designating the week of March 18 of each year as “President
4 Grover Cleveland Week;” now, therefore,

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

1. The week of March 18 of each year is designated as “President Grover Cleveland Week” to celebrate the distinguished life and public service of the 22nd and 24th President of the United States, Grover Cleveland.

2. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a proclamation calling upon public officials and the citizens of the State to observe “President Grover Cleveland Week” with appropriate activities and programs.

19 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

24 This resolution designates the week of March 18 of each year as
25 “President Grover Cleveland Week” in New Jersey to celebrate the
26 life and service of President Grover Cleveland.

27 President Cleveland was born in the borough of Caldwell, New
28 Jersey on March 18, 1837. After a successful career as a lawyer in
29 upstate New York, President Cleveland embarked on a
30 distinguished career in public service. In 1881, President Cleveland
31 was elected Mayor of Buffalo, New York, serving for one year
32 before being approached by the Democratic Party to run for
33 governor. In 1882, President Cleveland won, what was at the time,
34 the largest margin of victory ever for a New York election.
35 President Cleveland would serve for two years before the
36 presidential election of 1884.

In 1884, President Cleveland won the presidential election and became the first, and only, person born in New Jersey to win the presidency. President Cleveland began his term by not implementing the common “spoils system,” which awarded government jobs to supporters rather than those fit to fill the positions. The departure from the “spoils system” was a major reform in Washington, D.C. at the time. In 1886, President Cleveland became the first, and only, president to be wed in the White House.

46 Although President Cleveland was defeated in the presidential
47 election of 1888, he remained dedicated to the issues of the nation.
48 His popularity among the American people remained as well, and in

1 1892, President Cleveland was once again elected president,
2 defeating incumbent, President Benjamin Harris. President
3 Cleveland remains the only president to serve two, non-consecutive
4 terms, a testament to his determination even in the face of defeat.

5 After his second term ended in 1897, President Cleveland retired
6 to his home, Westland Mansion, in Princeton, New Jersey. Prior to
7 his death, he continued his service as a trustee for Princeton
8 University and occasional consultant for President Theodore
9 Roosevelt.