ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 16

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Assemblywoman CLEOPATRA G. TUCKER
District 28 (Essex)

SYNOPSIS

Designates June 8, 2018 as USS Liberty Remembrance Day.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.

AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION designating June 8, 2018 as USS *Liberty* Remembrance Day.

WHEREAS, The U.S. Navy intelligence ship USS *Liberty* is one of the most highly decorated ships in U.S. naval history; and

WHEREAS, On June 8, 1967, the USS *Liberty* was suddenly and brutally attacked in international waters by the air and naval forces of Israel; and

WHEREAS, The Israeli attack caused the USS *Liberty* to suffer one of the highest casualty rates ever inflicted upon a U.S. naval vessel, leaving 34 of her crew members dead and more than 170 of her crew members wounded; and

WHEREAS, Despite evidence suggesting that Israeli forces may have attacked the USS *Liberty* with knowledge that the vessel was a U.S. Navy ship, the administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson quickly dismissed the attack as an instance of mistaken identity, and failed to prosecute any offending parties or otherwise seek justice for the victims; and

WHEREAS, Although, on June 8, 2005, the USS *Liberty* Veterans Association filed with the Secretary of the Army, a fully documented report of war crimes that were alleged to have been committed by the Israeli attackers, U.S. officials have declined to investigate these allegations; and

WHEREAS, The government's consistently dismissive responses to the attack have worked to downplay the severity of this event; and

WHEREAS, The government's general lack of support for the plight of USS *Liberty* victims has essentially denied these victims the appropriate level of public recognition for their valorous service, and has left USS *Liberty* victims alone in their fight to maintain and increase public awareness of the events of June 8, 1967; and

WHEREAS, Governmental concern for the political interests of a foreign nation should not preclude the formal recognition or public remembrance of the national service of these Americans, who have made selfless sacrifices of life and limb in the defense of American interests; now, therefore,

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

1. This House hereby designates June 8, 2018 as USS *Liberty* Remembrance Day.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the USS *Liberty* Veterans Association.

STATEMENT

This resolution designates June 8, 2018 as USS *Liberty* Remembrance Day.

The USS *Liberty*, one of the most decorated ships in U.S. naval history, was brutally attacked on June 8, 1967 by Israeli air and naval forces. The attack left 34 crew members dead and more than 170 crew members wounded – a 70% casualty rate that is one of the highest in U.S. naval history. Despite evidence suggesting that Israeli forces may have attacked with knowledge that the vessel was a U.S. Navy ship, the administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson quickly dismissed the attack as an instance of mistaken identity, and failed to prosecute any offending parties or otherwise seek justice for the victims. In addition, although in 2005, the USS *Liberty* Veterans Association filed with the Secretary of the Army, a fully documented report of war crimes that were alleged to have been committed by the Israeli attackers, U.S. officials have declined to investigate these allegations. The government's consistently dismissive responses to the attack have worked to downplay the severity of this event. Moreover, the government's general lack of support for the plight of USS *Liberty* victims has essentially denied these victims the appropriate level of public recognition for their valorous service, and has left USS *Liberty* victims alone in their fight to maintain and increase public awareness of the events of June 8, 1967. While it is important to preserve good relations with Israel, concern for the political interests of a foreign nation should not preclude the formal recognition or public remembrance of the national service of these Americans who have made great sacrifices in the selfless defense of American interests.