ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 183

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED AUGUST 13, 2020

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman RAJ MUKHERJI
District 33 (Hudson)
Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE
District 37 (Bergen)
Assemblyman ROBERT J. KARABINCHAK
District 18 (Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:
Assemblyman Benson

SYNOPSIS

Urges Congress to make Election Day federal holiday in US.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/8/2020)

AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION urging Congress to make Election Day a federal holiday in the United States.

WHEREAS, Election Day, which occurs annually on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November, allows United States citizens to exercise their fundamental right to vote; and

WHEREAS, Voting is a critical element of democracy because the public is able to elect leaders and lawmakers, make decisions concerning public policy, and express opinions at national, state, and local levels; and

WHEREAS, Eight states across the country, including New Jersey, and the United States Territory of Puerto Rico have designated Election Day as a state holiday to encourage civic participation in elections and honor the nation's democratic rights; and

WHEREAS, On average, only half of the nation's voter-eligible public votes during national general elections and a leading cause among eligible voters for not voting was having a conflicting schedule that hindered their ability to vote; and

WHEREAS, Designating Election Day as a federal holiday will increase voter participation by ensuring greater flexibility to vote and easing some of the obstacles that negatively impact voter turnout, such as work schedules, school schedules, and time constraints; and

WHEREAS, Other countries, such as Belgium, Austria, France, Germany, Australia, and New Zealand, whose elections occur on weekends, and therefore do not interfere with citizens' work-week schedules, have seen much higher voter turnout rates compared to those in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Designating Election Day as a federal holiday will also allow polling places to run more smoothly by spreading out the number of voters throughout the day and by limiting long morning and evening voting lines, which are currently problematic to those who are only able to vote before or after work; and

WHEREAS, Increasing voter participation will also ensure elections are more representative of the country and its communities; and

WHEREAS, Respecting and championing the vote is essential to maintaining the highest ideals of the United States, such as liberty, justice, and equality, and for this reason, Election Day should be celebrated throughout the nation; now, therefore,

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

1. This House urges Congress to make Election Day a federal holiday.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, the

Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the New Jersey congressional delegation.

STATEMENT

This resolution urges Congress to make Election Day, which occurs each year on the first Tuesday after the First Monday in the month of November, as a federal holiday in the United States.

Voting is the most important civic duty granted to the public by the United States Constitution. By voting, the public is able to express their choice for who represents the country as public officials and lawmakers and for important public policy decisions. However, it is essential to increase voter participation and turnout in order to ensure elections are truly representative of the public. Designating Election Day as a federal holiday in the United States would increase voter turnout by easing some of the obstacles deterring voters and ensuring greater voter flexibility. In addition, it would emphasize to the public that the election process, and each vote, matters.

For these reasons, Congress is urged to make Election Day a federal holiday in the United States.