

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 209

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED DECEMBER 14, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman WILLIAM F. MOEN, JR.

District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

Assemblyman WAYNE P. DEANGELO

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

Assemblyman DANIEL R. BENSON

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Urges Congress to oppose trade agreements with United Kingdom unless Good Friday Agreement and other Irish peace elements are preserved.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/25/2021)

1 **AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION** urging Congress to oppose trade
2 agreements with the United Kingdom unless the Good Friday
3 Agreement and other elements of the Irish peace process are
4 preserved.
5
6 **WHEREAS**, The Good Friday Agreement signed on April 10, 1998,
7 Good Friday, centered on the division in Northern Irish society; and
8 **WHEREAS**, The conflict dates back to the early 1920's when Northern
9 Ireland became separated from the rest of Ireland; and
10 **WHEREAS**, Northern Ireland became part of the United Kingdom with
11 England, Wales, and Scotland, leaving the Republic of Ireland as a
12 separate country; and
13 **WHEREAS**, The population of Northern Ireland was divided in two,
14 with Unionists, who wanted to remain part of the United Kingdom,
15 and Nationalists, who wanted Northern Ireland to be independent
16 from the United Kingdom and join the Republic of Ireland; and
17 **WHEREAS**, In 1998, after nearly two years of talks and 30 years of
18 conflict, the Agreement was reached between the British and Irish
19 governments on how Northern Ireland should be governed; and
20 **WHEREAS**, In 1998, the Agreement was signed, resulting in a new
21 government being formed that would see power being shared
22 between Unionists and Nationalists; and
23 **WHEREAS**, The Agreement also addressed whether Northern Ireland
24 should remain in the United Kingdom or become part of a united
25 Ireland, and there would be no change without the consent of the
26 majority; and
27 **WHEREAS**, The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom is attempting
28 to redraw elements of the Brexit treaty with the European Union
29 relating to Northern Ireland; and
30 **WHEREAS**, The Prime Minister has ordered the altering of the
31 withdrawal agreement because he wants British ministers to have
32 the right to interpret key parts of the Northern Ireland protocol, a
33 legal document designed to avoid a hard border with Ireland; and
34 **WHEREAS**, The United States has long utilized trade agreements to
35 advance its foreign policy interests; and
36 **WHEREAS**, The United States has a longstanding interest in ensuring
37 the preservation of the Good Friday Agreement; London's highly-
38 prized trade deal must be evaluated in terms of that longstanding
39 interest; and
40 **WHEREAS**, Brexit cannot be allowed to imperil the Agreement,
41 including the stability brought by the invisible and frictionless
42 border between the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland; and
43 **WHEREAS**, The United Kingdom must continue to honor the
44 Agreement, which supported the peace settlement in Northern
45 Ireland, as it departs from the European Union; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Members of the United States Congress have warned that
2 if the United Kingdom undermines the peace process or reinstates a
3 hard border to secure Brexit on its terms, the United Kingdom's
4 chances of securing the required congressional support for a United
5 Kingdom-United States free trade deal will disappear; and

6 **WHEREAS**, Four senior members of Congress in a joint statement
7 warned that the United Kingdom's plans could have disastrous
8 consequences for the Agreement and the broader process of
9 maintaining peace on the island of Ireland; and

10 **WHEREAS**, The members of Congress also stated that many in the
11 Congress and the United States consider the issue of the agreement
12 and a potential United Kingdom-United States free trade agreement
13 inextricably linked; and

14 **WHEREAS**, This House supports the idea that we cannot allow the
15 Agreement that brought peace to Northern Ireland to become a
16 casualty of Brexit and any trade deal between the United States and
17 the United Kingdom must be contingent upon respect for the
18 Agreement and preventing the return of a hard border; and

19 **WHEREAS**, This House urges Congress to oppose any agreement with
20 the United Kingdom unless the Agreement and other elements of
21 the Irish peace process are preserved; now, therefore,

22

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

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26 1. This House urges Congress to oppose trade agreements with
27 the United Kingdom unless the Good Friday Agreement and other
28 elements of the Irish peace process are preserved.

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30 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
31 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the
32 President and Vice President of the United States, the Majority and
33 Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, the Speaker and
34 Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, and
35 each member of the Congress elected from this State.

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STATEMENT

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40 The Good Friday Agreement was signed on April 10, 1998,
41 Good Friday, and centered on the division in Northern Irish society.
42 The conflict dates back to the early 1920's when Northern Ireland
43 became separated from the rest of Ireland.

44 Great Britain ruled Ireland for hundreds of years. Northern
45 Ireland became part of the United Kingdom with England, Wales
46 and Scotland, leaving the Republic of Ireland as a separate country.

1 The population of Northern Ireland was divided in two: Unionists
2 who wanted to remain part of the United Kingdom, and Nationalists
3 who wanted Northern Ireland to be independent from the United
4 Kingdom and join the Republic of Ireland.

5 In 1998, after nearly two years of talks and 30 years of conflict,
6 the Agreement was signed, resulting in a new government being
7 formed that would see power being shared between Unionists and
8 Nationalists. An attempt by the United Kingdom to leave the
9 European Union on its own terms will undermine the Agreement,
10 causing the Agreement to become a casualty of Brexit talks.

11 The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom is attempting to
12 redraw elements of the Brexit treaty with the European Union
13 relating to Northern Ireland because he wants British ministers to
14 have the right to interpret key parts of the Northern Ireland
15 protocol, a legal document designed to avoid a hard border with
16 Ireland. However, the change threatens to put London's highly-
17 prized trade deal with the United States in jeopardy. The United
18 Kingdom must continue to honor the Agreement, which supported
19 the peace settlement in Northern Ireland, as it departs from the
20 European Union.

21 Four senior members of the U.S. Congress in a joint statement
22 warned that the United Kingdom's plans could have disastrous
23 consequences for the Agreement and the broader process of
24 maintaining peace on the island of Ireland, and many in the
25 Congress and the United States consider the issue of the Agreement
26 and a potential United States-United Kingdom free trade agreement
27 inextricably linked.

28 This House supports the idea that we cannot allow the
29 Agreement that brought peace to Northern Ireland to become a
30 casualty of Brexit and any trade deal between the United States and
31 United Kingdom must be contingent upon respect for the
32 Agreement and preventing the return of a hard border. This House
33 urges Congress to oppose any agreement with the United Kingdom
34 unless the Agreement and other elements of the Irish peace process
35 are preserved.