

P.L. 2020, Joint Resolution No. 6, ***approved September 30, 2020***
Senate Joint Resolution No. 92

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating September of each year as “Safe
2 Haven Awareness Month” in New Jersey.
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4 **WHEREAS**, Safe Haven laws have been enacted in several states across
5 the nation in order to prevent unsafe infant abandonments and
6 fatalities as reported in several high profile cases that generated
7 nationwide media attention; and
8 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey was one of the first five states to enact a Safe
9 Haven law for infants who are unable to be cared for, with the
10 enactment of the "New Jersey Safe Haven Infant Protection Act"
11 (Safe Haven law) in 2000; and
12 **WHEREAS**, The Safe Haven law allows a distressed parent or someone
13 on his or her behalf to safely, legally, and anonymously surrender
14 an unharmed infant to a staff member at one of New Jersey's legally
15 designated Safe Haven sites within 30 days of the child's birth; and
16 **WHEREAS**, Legally designated sites in New Jersey include hospital
17 emergency rooms, police and fire stations, and ambulance and first
18 aid squads; and
19 **WHEREAS**, Under the Safe Haven law, the Department of Children
20 and Families (DCF) ensures that an infant is placed in a foster or
21 pre-adoptive loving home; and
22 **WHEREAS**, The DCF is the State department tasked with promoting
23 the Safe Haven law in New Jersey in partnership with public and
24 private agencies, the Legislature, schools, community
25 organizations, and community leaders; and
26 **WHEREAS**, The DCF promotes the Safe Haven law through annual
27 public awareness campaigns, conferences, workshops, community
28 events, and the distribution of educational materials; and
29 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey schools will begin teaching high school
30 students about the Safe Haven law in the upcoming school year;
31 and
32 **WHEREAS**, Since the enactment of New Jersey's Safe Haven law in
33 2000, the law has successfully saved the lives of 77 infants in this
34 State; and
35 **WHEREAS**, On the 20th anniversary of the enactment of the Safe
36 Haven law, it is altogether fitting, proper, and in the public interest
37 for New Jersey to designate September as “Safe Haven Awareness
38 Month” in order to strengthen the State's efforts in raising
39 awareness and saving infant lives; now, therefore,
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41 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
42 *State of New Jersey:*

1 1. September of each year is designated as “Safe Haven
2 Awareness Month.”

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4 2. The Governor may annually issue a proclamation
5 recognizing September as “Safe Haven Awareness Month” and call
6 upon public officials and the residents of the State of New Jersey to
7 observe the month with appropriate activities and programs.

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9 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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14 This joint resolution designates September of each year as “Safe
15 Haven Awareness Month” in New Jersey.

16 Safe Haven laws have been enacted in several states across the
17 nation in order to prevent unsafe infant abandonments and fatalities
18 as reported in several high profile cases that generated nationwide
19 media attention.

20 New Jersey was one of the first five states to enact a Safe Haven
21 law for infants for infants who are unable to be cared for, with the
22 enactment of the "New Jersey Safe Haven Infant Protection Act"
23 (Safe Haven law) in 2000. The Safe Haven law allows a distressed
24 parent or someone on his or her behalf to safely, legally, and
25 anonymously surrender an unharmed infant to a staff member at one
26 of New Jersey's legally designated Safe Haven sites within 30 days
27 of the child's birth. Legally designated sites in New Jersey include
28 hospital emergency rooms, police and fire stations, and ambulance
29 and first aid squads.

30 Under the Safe Haven law, the Department of Children and
31 Families (DCF) ensures that an infant is placed in a foster or pre-
32 adoptive loving home. The DCF is the State department tasked
33 with promoting the Safe Haven law in New Jersey in partnership
34 with public and private agencies, the Legislature, schools,
35 community organizations, and community leaders. The DCF
36 promotes the Safe Haven law through annual public awareness
37 campaigns, conferences, workshops, community events, and the
38 distribution of educational materials. New Jersey schools will
39 begin teaching high school students about the Safe Haven law in the
40 upcoming school year.

41 Since the enactment of New Jersey's Safe Haven law in 2000,
42 the law has successfully saved the lives of 77 infants in this State.

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46 Designates September of each year as “Safe Haven Awareness
47 Month” in New Jersey.