

**SENATE, No. 2029**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**219th LEGISLATURE**

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INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

**Sponsored by:**  
**Senator STEVEN V. OROHO**  
**District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Designates “Franklinite” as official mineral of State of NJ.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



1   **AN ACT** designating “Franklinite” as the official mineral of the  
2       State of New Jersey and supplementing chapter 9A of Title 52 of  
3       the Revised Statutes.

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5   **WHEREAS**, The mineral Franklinite was first described in 1819 by  
6       Pierre Berthier and was named in honor of Benjamin Franklin; and  
7   **WHEREAS**, Franklinite, with a striking black color, submetallic luster,  
8       and sharp octahedral crystals, is aesthetically pleasing and makes  
9       for handsome mineral specimens, creating the potential for strong  
10      interest from mineral collectors around the world; and

11   **WHEREAS**, New Jersey has a long history of mineral mining, including  
12      two world-famous zinc mines in Sussex County, at Franklin and at  
13      Ogdensburg, which operated for more than 250 years, producing  
14      more than 33 million tons of high-grade zinc ore and contributing  
15      significantly to the economic vitality and cultural history of the  
16      State of New Jersey and the nation; and

17   **WHEREAS**, Three hundred fifty-nine different confirmed minerals have  
18      been found in these two mines, 19 of which are not found anywhere  
19      else on Earth; and

20   **WHEREAS**, Though millions of tons of Franklinite, Willemite, and  
21      Zincite are found in these mines, they are found elsewhere only in  
22      small amounts; and

23   **WHEREAS**, The Franklin Mine closed in 1954, and the Ogdensburg  
24      (Sterling Hill) Mine closed in 1986, but both are memorialized by  
25      the Franklin Mineral Museum, the Sterling Hill Mining Museum,  
26      and the Franklin-Ogdensburg Mineralogical Society; and

27   **WHEREAS**, In 1968, New Jersey passed a resolution declaring the  
28      Borough of Franklin the “Fluorescent Mineral Capital of the  
29      World”; and

30   **WHEREAS**, In a poll conducted by the New Jersey Department of  
31      Environmental Protection with several thousand national  
32      participants, 96 percent voted in support of Franklinite as the New  
33      Jersey State mineral; and

34   **WHEREAS**, In order to pay recognition to the scientific, economic, and  
35      historic importance of Franklinite, it is fitting and appropriate to  
36      designate Franklinite as the official mineral of the State of New  
37      Jersey; now, therefore,

38  
39        **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
40       *of New Jersey:*

41  
42        1.   “Franklinite” is designated as the official mineral of the  
43        State of New Jersey.

44  
45        2.   This act shall take effect immediately.

## STATEMENT

This bill designates “Franklinite” as the official mineral of the State of New Jersey.

The mineral Franklinite was first described in 1819 by Pierre Berthier and was named in honor of Benjamin Franklin. With a striking black color, submetallic luster, and sharp octahedral crystals, Franklinite is aesthetically pleasing and makes for handsome mineral specimens, creating the potential for strong interest from mineral collectors around the world.

New Jersey has a long history of mineral mining, including two world-famous zinc mines in Sussex County, at Franklin and at Ogdensburg. These mines operated for more than 250 years, producing more than 33 million tons of high-grade zinc ore and contributing significantly to the economic vitality and cultural history of the State of New Jersey and the nation. Three hundred fifty-nine different confirmed minerals have been found in these two mines, 19 of which are not found anywhere else on Earth. Though millions of tons of Franklinite, Willemite, and Zincite are found in these mines, they are found elsewhere only in small amounts.

The Franklin Mine closed in 1954, and the Ogdensburg (Sterling Hill) Mine closed in 1986, but both are memorialized by the Franklin Mineral Museum, the Sterling Hill Mining Museum, and the Franklin-Ogdensburg Mineralogical Society.

In 1968, New Jersey passed a resolution declaring the Borough of Franklin the “Fluorescent Mineral Capital of the World.” In a poll conducted by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection with several thousand national participants, 96 percent voted in support of Franklinite as the New Jersey State mineral. In order to pay recognition to the scientific, economic, and historic importance of Franklinite, it is fitting and appropriate to designate Franklinite as the official mineral of the State of New Jersey.