

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 114

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 28, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator BOB SMITH

District 17 (Middlesex and Somerset)

SYNOPSIS

Commemorates 50th anniversary of establishment of DEP.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** commemorating the 50th
2 anniversary of the establishment of the Department of
3 Environmental Protection.
4
5 **WHEREAS**, The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
6 (DEP) is the government agency chiefly responsible for the
7 conservation of the State’s natural resources, the promotion of
8 environmental protection, and the prevention of pollution in the
9 State; and
10 **WHEREAS**, Spearheaded by then-Assemblyman Thomas H. Kean and
11 Governor William T. Cahill, the DEP was established on April 22,
12 1970 – America’s first official Earth Day – in order to consolidate
13 the State’s pollution control functions under one Executive Branch
14 agency; and
15 **WHEREAS**, In 1970, the New Jersey Audubon Society heralded the
16 new agency as a “big step forward toward sound conservation
17 practices and the improvement and preservation of New Jersey’s
18 clean and healthy total environment in which man and all other
19 forms of life so depend for survival”; and
20 **WHEREAS**, Originally established with only five divisions, today, the
21 DEP oversees dozens of programs, and employs over 2,900 people,
22 in the fields of air quality, energy, and sustainability; water resource
23 management; land use management; climate and flood resilience;
24 natural and historic resources; fish and wildlife conservation; site
25 remediation; waste management; and recycling; and
26 **WHEREAS**, Among its many accomplishments, the DEP has played a
27 critical role in the attainment of the State’s 2020 greenhouse gas
28 reduction goal, established pursuant to the “Global Warming
29 Response Act,” P.L.2007, c.112 (C.26:2C-37 et al.), years ahead of
30 schedule, and is working proactively toward attainment of the
31 State’s 2050 goal; and
32 **WHEREAS**, The DEP’s Licensed Site Remediation Professional
33 (LSRP) program has reduced the threat of contamination to the
34 public health and the environment, overseeing the cleanup of over
35 10,000 contaminated sites in the State; and
36 **WHEREAS**, Through the New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure
37 Financing Program, the DEP, in partnership with the New Jersey
38 Infrastructure Bank, has helped finance over \$7 billion in low-
39 interest loans for environmental infrastructure projects that help
40 protect and improve water quality and ensure safe and adequate
41 drinking water across the State; and
42 **WHEREAS**, Through its implementation of the Green Acres program,
43 the DEP has helped preserve over half a million acres of New
44 Jersey’s natural landscape, protecting water quality and wildlife
45 habitat, and providing the public with parks, beaches, and historic
46 sites and natural areas to enjoy in perpetuity; and
47 **WHEREAS**, The DEP has helped protect communities from the impacts
48 of climate change, implementing flood protection and control
49 measures, analyzing the risk of flooding, and providing assistance

1 to flooded communities, including buying flood-prone properties
2 under the Blue Acres program; and
3 **WHEREAS**, The DEP preserves and maintains the State's parks and
4 forests, historic sites, and other natural resources, ensuring that
5 current and future generations will benefit from their existence; and
6 **WHEREAS**, To complement its regulatory and management efforts,
7 since the early 1980s, the DEP has developed and supported
8 environmental education aimed at increasing public awareness of
9 environmental issues, encouraging the public's involvement in
10 environmental protection, and providing experiential education,
11 recreation, and research opportunities; and
12 **WHEREAS**, The DEP's contributions toward protecting the public
13 health and the environment are innumerable, and the agency has
14 been a national leader in pollution prevention efforts and
15 environmental management strategies since its inception; and
16 **WHEREAS**, The year 2020 marks the 50th anniversary of the
17 establishment of the DEP, and it is fitting and proper for the
18 Legislature to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments and
19 continued success of the agency; now, therefore,

20

21 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Senate of the State of New Jersey (the
22 General Assembly concurring):

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24 1. The Legislature commemorates the 50th anniversary of the
25 establishment of the New Jersey Department of Environmental
26 Protection.

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28 2. The Legislature recognizes and celebrates the many
29 accomplishments of the Department of Environmental Protection,
30 and the important role the agency has played in protecting public
31 health and the environment, preserving the State's natural
32 resources, and preventing pollution.

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34 3. The Legislature recognizes and commends the employees of
35 the Department of Environmental Protection, past and present, for
36 their hard work, dedication, and accomplishments.

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38 4. Copies of this Resolution, as filed with the Secretary of
39 State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or
40 the Secretary of the Senate to the Governor and the Commissioner
41 of Environmental Protection.

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STATEMENT

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46 This concurrent resolution commemorates the 50th anniversary
47 of the establishment of the New Jersey Department of
48 Environmental Protection (DEP).

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2 conservation of the State's natural resources, the promotion of
3 environmental protection, and the prevention of pollution in the
4 State. It was established on April 22, 1970 – America's first official
5 Earth Day – in order to consolidate the State's pollution control
6 functions under one executive branch agency. Today, the DEP
7 oversees dozens of programs, and employs over 2,900 people, in the
8 fields of air quality, energy, and sustainability; water resource
9 management; land use management; climate and flood resilience;
10 natural and historic resources; fish and wildlife conservation; site
11 remediation; waste management; and recycling.

12 The DEP's contributions toward protecting the public health and
13 the environment are innumerable, and the agency has been a
14 national leader in pollution prevention efforts and environmental
15 management strategies since its inception. The year 2020 marks the
16 50th anniversary of the establishment of the DEP, and it is fitting
17 and proper for the Legislature to recognize and celebrate the
18 accomplishments and continued success of the agency. This
19 resolution also recognizes and commends the employees of the
20 DEP, past and present, for their hard work, dedication, and
21 accomplishments.