

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 157

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 24, 2018

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ELIANA PINTOR MARIN

District 29 (Essex)

Assemblyman ERIC HOUGHTALING

District 11 (Monmouth)

Assemblywoman JOANN DOWNEY

District 11 (Monmouth)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Wirths and Space

SYNOPSIS

Designates March 15 of each year as Peter Francisco Day in New Jersey.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/26/2019)

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating March 15 of each year as Peter
2 Francisco Day in New Jersey.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, Peter Francisco came from humble beginnings, kidnapped
5 from Azores, the Portuguese islands, and abandoned as a five year
6 old child in Virginia, and living in an orphanage until a local judge
7 took the boy into his home and raised him more or less as an
8 indentured servant; and
9 **WHEREAS**, Inspired after listening to Patrick Henry’s renowned “Give
10 me liberty or give me death” speech in 1775, Francisco joined the
11 10th Virginia regiment as a private at the age of sixteen; and
12 **WHEREAS**, Francisco’s strength and stature was widely recognized as
13 he stood six feet, six inches tall in adulthood, almost one foot taller
14 than the average man at the time, and weighed at least 260 pounds;
15 and
16 **WHEREAS**, In addition to Francisco’s physical strength, he was well-
17 regarded for his courage and fortitude in battles, fighting in several
18 battles while sustaining injuries, and also saving the life of his
19 colonel in one instance; and
20 **WHEREAS**, While on a mission, Francisco stopped at an inn and was
21 surrounded by nine enemy soldiers who announced his arrest, but
22 Francisco fought his way through the nine soldiers and was able to
23 escape, even while sustaining his sixth and final injury of the war, a
24 bullet wound; and
25 **WHEREAS**, Due to Francisco’s many feats of bravery and unusual
26 strength, he was widely regarded as the most famous private of the
27 Revolutionary War, and Francisco was present at the surrender of
28 British General Lord Charles Cornwallis in Yorktown, which ended
29 the war with Great Britain; and
30 **WHEREAS**, After his service in the war, Francisco completed his
31 formal education, and became known not just for his role in the
32 war, but also for his gentle and charitable nature, as well as for his
33 fine singing voice; and
34 **WHEREAS**, In later years, Peter Francisco served as the sergeant-at-
35 arms of the Virginia legislature until his death in 1831; and
36 **WHEREAS**, Peter Francisco served his nation with great honor and
37 distinction, and his contributions to the nation are a testament to his
38 character; and
39 **WHEREAS**, Today Peter Francisco’s bravery is celebrated across the
40 United States, especially amongst the Portuguese Community that
41 proudly sees the value of a Portuguese man that helped to build our
42 great nation; and
43 **WHEREAS**, It is therefore fitting and proper, and in the interest of the
44 State of New Jersey and its residents, to designate March 15 of each
45 year as “Peter Francisco Day” in New Jersey; now, therefore,

1 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
2 *State of New Jersey:*

3

4 1. a. March 15 of each year is designated as “Peter Francisco
5 Day” in New Jersey to recognize and commemorate the many
6 contributions Peter Francisco made during the Revolutionary War.

7 b. The Governor shall annually issue a proclamation and call
8 upon public officials, and all residents of this State, to observe
9 “Peter Francisco Day” with appropriate events and programs.

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11 2. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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16 This resolution designates March 15 of each year as “Peter
17 Francisco Day” in New Jersey to recognize Peter Francisco’s many
18 acts of bravery and contributions during the Revolutionary War.

19 Known as a giant of a man, Francisco, a man of Portuguese
20 descent, stood at six feet, six inches tall, approximately one foot
21 taller than the average man at the time. His strength and size gained
22 him much notoriety during the war, and his courageous nature led to
23 incredible stories of his life, some impossible to verify, being told
24 and retold for many generations.

25 Francisco fought through several battles while sustaining
26 injuries, and he made daring escapes from seemingly impossible
27 situations. His contributions have already been recognized by other
28 states, and it is fitting for New Jersey to recognize them as well.