

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 153

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 1, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Assemblyman JOE DANIELSEN

District 17 (Middlesex and Somerset)

SYNOPSIS

Denounces racism in the wake of COVID-19.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/11/2020)

1 **AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION** denouncing racism and any form of
2 bias crime in New Jersey resulting from the coronavirus.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, The 2019 coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic was first
5 reported in the city of Wuhan, Hubei, China, in December 2019;
6 and
7 **WHEREAS**, The spread of COVID-19 has led to increased prejudice,
8 xenophobia, discrimination, violence, and racism against people
9 of East Asian and Southeast Asian descent and appearance
10 world-wide, particularly in Northern America, Europe, as well as
11 countries in Africa and the Middle East; and
12 **WHEREAS**, On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization's
13 (WHO) Emergency Committee issued a statement advising all
14 countries to be mindful of the "principles of Article 3 of the
15 International Health Regulations," which the WHO says is a caution
16 against "actions that promote stigma or discrimination," when
17 conducting national response measures to the outbreak; and
18 **WHEREAS**, According to the Pew Research Center, more than 20.4
19 million people living in the United States (U.S.) are of Asian
20 descent and those who are of Chinese heritage make up the
21 largest group of Asian people, at 4.9 million; and
22 **WHEREAS**, The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
23 has appealed to the public to remain calm while trying to quell
24 misinformation indicating that "viruses cannot target people from
25 specific populations, ethnicities, or racial backgrounds"; and
26 **WHEREAS**, On March 14, 2020, more than 200 civil rights groups in
27 the U.S. demanded that the U.S. House of Representatives and
28 Senate leadership publicly denounce the growing amount of anti-
29 Asian racism related to the pandemic and take "tangible steps to
30 counter the hysteria" around COVID-19; and
31 **WHEREAS**, The Federal Bureau of Investigation defines a hate crime
32 as a "criminal offense against a person or property motivated in
33 whole or in part by an offender's bias against a race, religion,
34 disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity";
35 and
36 **WHEREAS**, The Bias Crime Unit, in the New Jersey Division of
37 Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety, is the
38 Statewide coordinator of efforts to eliminate crimes motivated by
39 prejudice against others based on race, color, religion, sexual
40 orientation, gender, disability, or ethnicity, and investigates
41 complaints; and
42 **WHEREAS**, It is in the public interest of the citizens of the State of
43 New Jersey and this great nation to denounce, in the strongest
44 terms, any hate crimes or any other form of conduct that
45 constitutes racism, religious or ethnic bias, discrimination based
46 on ethnicity including incitement to violence resulting from
47 COVID-19, and to encourage positive social behaviors; now,
48 therefore,

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

1. This House strongly denounces any form of racism, ethnic bias, discrimination, incitement to violence, or animus targeting minorities in New Jersey resulting from COVID-19.

2. The Governor and the Attorney General are encouraged to provide State assistance to victims of hate crimes, to enhance security measures and improve preparedness at institutions that have been targeted because of their affiliation with any particular race or ethnicity resulting from COVID-19, and to encourage positive social behaviors among New Jersey citizens during this difficult time.

3. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the President and Vice President of the United States of America, the presiding officers of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress elected from the State of New Jersey.

STATEMENT

This resolution denounces racism and any form of bias crime in New Jersey resulting from coronavirus (COVID-19).

The resolution further encourages the Governor and the Attorney General to provide State assistance to victims of hate crimes and to enhance security measures and improve preparedness at institutions that have been targeted because of their affiliation with any particular race or ethnicity resulting from COVID-19, and to encourage positive social behaviors among New Jersey citizens during this difficult time.

COVID-19 was first reported in December of 2019 in the city of Wuhan, Hubei, China. The spread of COVID-19 has led to increased prejudice, xenophobia, discrimination, violence, and racism against people of East Asian and Southeast Asian descent and appearance world-wide, particularly in Northern America and Europe, as well as countries in Africa and the Middle East.