

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION No. 30

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED JUNE 24, 1996

By Senators LYNCH and DiFRANCESCO

- 1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** honoring Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz for
2 his years of distinguished service.
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- 4 **WHEREAS**, Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz was appointed Chief
5 Justice by Governor Brendan Byrne to replace Chief Justice
6 Richard Hughes in August of 1979 and was appointed to a second
7 term and tenure by Governor Thomas Kean; and
- 8 **WHEREAS**, Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz has served well the
9 citizens of this State in that capacity for almost 17 years and also
10 has served in the Legislature as an Assemblyman from Middlesex
11 County for two terms from 1966 to 1970; and
- 12 **WHEREAS**, Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz will be remembered not
13 only for his landmark judicial decisions but also for his managerial
14 acumen in overseeing the day-to-day operations of the State court
15 system; and
- 16 **WHEREAS**, The fine national reputation enjoyed by the New Jersey
17 Supreme Court was continued and enhanced by Chief Justice
18 Robert N. Wilentz's leadership, scholarship and integrity; and
- 19 **WHEREAS**, Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz has left his mark on the
20 New Jersey judicial system by the establishment of such programs
21 as the New Jersey Judicial College and the Municipal Court Judicial
22 College; and
- 23 **WHEREAS**, Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz led the unification of the
24 trial courts into a Statewide court system; and
- 25 **WHEREAS**, Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz initiated many reforms
26 in the area of case management including the implementation of
27 management teams, a speedy trial program, complementary dispute
28 resolution and a general modernization of the municipal court
29 system to include computerization, training and coordination with
30 the leadership of the vicinage assignment judges; and
- 31 **WHEREAS**, Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz was instrumental in the
32 overall automation of the court system including electronic filing,
33 coordination and cooperation with government agencies and other
34 computer-related advances in management; and
- 35 **WHEREAS**, Under the guidance of Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz
36 a comprehensive Family Court system was implemented which
37 provided one of the settings for the use of volunteers in the court
38 system such as persons working with youth services planning; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz received national
2 recognition for his leadership role in establishing the Task Force on
3 Women in the Courts and continued his policy of supporting equal
4 access initiatives by creating a similar body addressing the concerns
5 of minorities in the courts; and

6 **WHEREAS**, Chief Justice Wilentz's tenure in office may be
7 characterized best by borrowing a phrase from his statement issued
8 on June 13, 1996 announcing his retirement which referred to
9 "commitment to judicial independence, total and uncompromising";
10 now, therefore,

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12 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
13 *of New Jersey:*

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15 1. Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz is hereby honored for his
16 dedication to the public good and his years of distinguished service on
17 the bench and as a member of the Legislature.

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19 2. Upon approval by the Governor, a duly authenticated copy of
20 this joint resolution shall be transmitted to Chief Justice Robert N.
21 Wilentz.

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23 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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28 This joint resolution honors Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz on the
29 event of his retirement from that position which he has held for nearly
30 17 years. The Chief Justice served two terms as an Assemblyman
31 representing Middlesex County and had extensive private practice
32 experience before assuming the position of Chief Justice. The
33 management initiatives and reforms of the administration of justice in
34 New Jersey seen under the tenure of the Chief Justice are as
35 significant as the influential court decisions which he authored or in
36 which he participated.

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41 Honors Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz for his years of distinguished
42 service.