

## SENATE RESOLUTION No. 115

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED DECEMBER 18, 1997

By Senators **BENNETT, O'CONNOR, Littell, Codey,  
Adler, DiFrancesco and Kyrillos**

- 1 **A SENATE RESOLUTION** calling on the Secretary of the Navy to make an  
2 advance commitment that the Battleship New Jersey will be released to her  
3 namesake State for use as a museum and memorial.  
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- 5 **WHEREAS**, In 1938, a Joint Resolution was passed by the New Jersey  
6 Legislature requesting that one of the new class of battleships be named for  
7 the State of New Jersey and this request was subsequently honored by  
8 Acting Secretary of the Navy Charles Edison, future Governor of this State  
9 and son of the State's famous inventor Thomas Edison; and
- 10 **WHEREAS**, The New Jersey Senate, on behalf of the citizens of the State of  
11 New Jersey, notes that Governor Christine Todd Whitman has requested  
12 the donation of the USS New Jersey (BB-62) to the battleship's namesake  
13 State by letter to the Secretary of the Navy in February 1995 and again in  
14 December 1997; and
- 15 **WHEREAS**, The USS New Jersey Battleship Commission, created pursuant to  
16 Chapter 440 of the New Jersey laws of 1979, submitted an application to  
17 Naval Sea Systems Command in February 1996 for donation of the ship,  
18 which during World War II was the flagship of Fleet Admiral William F.  
19 "Bull" Halsey, USN, a resident of Elizabeth, New Jersey; and
- 20 **WHEREAS**, Thousands of New Jersey residents to-date and four former  
21 governors have, in an effort to build a crescendo over the last 20 years,  
22 supported the work of the Battleship Commission in its efforts to acquire  
23 this ship by donating hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Battleship  
24 New Jersey Foundation and have given countless hours of time in volunteer  
25 service; and
- 26 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey corporations, foundations, State veteran, civic and  
27 fraternal organizations have pledged their financial support upon the  
28 awarding of the ship to our State; and
- 29 **WHEREAS**, Wide public support for the project has been shown in the  
30 purchase of over 7,000 special battleship license plates that have been  
31 issued to-date since 1996 and in the State's income tax refund donation  
32 check-off option, which went into effect in 1996 and has resulted in over  
33 15,000 initial participants and is projected to have over 35,000 for 1997;  
34 and

1 **WHEREAS**, The New Jersey State Elks Association, with their 138 lodges and  
2 50,000 members, have undertaken fully the effort of raising thousands of  
3 dollars to support the return of the Battleship New Jersey to this State  
4 through Operation TOP; and

5 **WHEREAS**, Though there has been speculation recently that a different  
6 battleship may be donated to the area, it is a fact that only one battleship  
7 can be sustained economically in the Port of New York/New Jersey and  
8 that battleship should be the USS New Jersey; and

9 **WHEREAS**, The Military Ocean Terminal Reuse Commission in Bayonne has  
10 included the USS New Jersey in their master plan, in which it will serve as  
11 a world-class museum and memorial, and at a site with direct ramp access  
12 to the New Jersey Turnpike and adjacent to the Hudson Light Rail System  
13 connecting points north along the New Jersey side of the Hudson River;  
14 and

15 **WHEREAS**, This prime location, near Liberty State Park, will afford visitors to  
16 the battleship easy access to other major area attractions, including the  
17 Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, and the Liberty Science Center, so that the  
18 USS New Jersey, in conjunction with those attractions, will become the  
19 tourist centerpiece of the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area, which  
20 is the largest tourist destination of the entire Northeast region; now,  
21 therefore

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23 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

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25 1. This House calls on the Secretary of the Navy to make an advance  
26 commitment that the Battleship New Jersey be released eventually to her  
27 namesake State for use as a museum and memorial and to make certain that  
28 no other battleship be donated to this area where it might compete  
29 economically with this State's distinguished naval namesake.

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31 2. Duly authenticated copies of this resolution, signed by the President of  
32 the Senate and attested by the Secretary thereof, shall be transmitted to  
33 Secretary of the Navy John Dalton and to each member of the Congress of  
34 the United States elected from New Jersey.

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#### STATEMENT

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4 Battleship New Jersey be released eventually to this State.