

P.L. 2021, Joint Resolution No. 3, *approved April 19, 2021*
Senate Joint Resolution No.93

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating February 14 of each year as
2 Frederick Douglass Day in New Jersey.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, Frederick Douglass, a renowned African-American
5 abolitionist, human rights activist, author, and public speaker, was
6 born into slavery in or around 1818 in Talbot County, Maryland;
7 and
8 **WHEREAS**, Frederick Douglass’ exact birthdate is unknown, but
9 during his lifetime he chose to celebrate his birth annually on
10 February 14; and
11 **WHEREAS**, Frederick Douglass spent a majority of his youth and
12 young adulthood as a slave when he experienced physical abuse,
13 cruelty, and received very minimal education; and
14 **WHEREAS**, Despite the challenges he faced, Frederick Douglass
15 learned how to read and write through self-education and later
16 began teaching other slaves how to read using the Bible; and
17 **WHEREAS**, After years of slavery and abuse, Frederick Douglass
18 escaped from slavery in 1838 at the age of 20; and
19 **WHEREAS**, After escaping from slavery, Frederick Douglass began
20 attending and giving speeches at abolitionist meetings; and
21 **WHEREAS**, Because of his activism and public speaking, Frederick
22 Douglass was chosen, in 1843, to become part of the American
23 Anti-Slavery Society’s Hundred Conventions Project, which was a
24 six-month tour across the United States; and
25 **WHEREAS**, Throughout this tour, Frederick Douglass shared his
26 experiences with slavery and spoke publically about the importance
27 of abolishing slavery and ensuring equality for all Americans; and
28 **WHEREAS**, Frederick Douglass continued to utilize his knowledge and
29 passion for the abolition of slavery to publish his own abolitionist
30 newsletter titled The North Star, which published articles on slavery
31 and other injustices; and
32 **WHEREAS**, Frederick Douglass became highly respected and served as
33 an advisor to Abraham Lincoln throughout the Civil War; and
34 **WHEREAS**, Even after slavery was abolished as a result of the
35 Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, Frederick Douglass continued
36 to fight tirelessly for the full-integration of African-Americans into
37 the political and economic life of the United States; and
38 **WHEREAS**, Because of his determination, passion for human rights,
39 and anti-slavery activism, Frederick Douglass was named the
40 “Father of the Civil Rights Movement”; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Frederick Douglass’ activism extended beyond the
 2 abolition of slavery as he also became a leader in the movement for
 3 women’s rights, fighting for equality and women’s suffrage; and

4 **WHEREAS**, In addition to Frederick Douglass’ accomplishments as an
 5 activist, he also became the first African-American to hold high
 6 office serving as an ambassador to the Dominican Republic, and
 7 later being the first African-American to receive a vote for
 8 President of the United States during the Republican National
 9 Convention in 1888; and

10 **WHEREAS**, Frederick Douglass remained an active speaker, writer, and
 11 human rights activist until his death in 1895; and

12 **WHEREAS**, Frederick Douglass dedicated his life to ensuring freedom
 13 and equality for future generations of Americans and for this
 14 reason, the remarkable life of Frederick Douglass should be
 15 remembered and celebrated by all New Jersey residents; now,
 16 therefore,

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18 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
 19 *State of New Jersey:*

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21 1. February 14 of each year is designated as “Frederick
 22 Douglass Day” in New Jersey to honor the remarkable life of
 23 Frederick Douglass, his accomplishments, and his activism.

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25 2. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a
 26 proclamation calling upon public officials, private organizations,
 27 and all citizens of the State to observe “Frederick Douglass Day”
 28 with appropriate events and activities.

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30 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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35 This joint resolution designates February 14 of each year as
 36 Frederick Douglass Day in New Jersey.

37 Frederick Douglass was born into slavery in or around 1818 in
 38 Talbot County, Maryland. From the age of 6 to the age of 20,
 39 Frederick Douglass was a slave to multiple different slave owners.
 40 While enslaved, Frederick Douglas was abused and received very
 41 minimal education. Frederick Douglass learned to read and write
 42 through self-education and soon began teaching other slaves how to
 43 read using the Bible. After years of abuse and after multiple failed
 44 attempts to escape, Frederick Douglass finally escaped from slavery
 45 in 1838 and sought refuge in a safe house in New York.

46 Frederick Douglass became a famous abolitionist, human rights,
 47 activist, writer, and speaker throughout the country recounting his
 48 experiences as a slave, speaking out against injustices, and
 49 supporting women’s rights. He became a leader of the abolitionist

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1 movement, the first African-American member to attend the Seneca
2 Falls Convention for women's rights, and an advisor to multiple
3 presidents on the subjects of slavery and black suffrage. Frederick
4 Douglass also authored multiple autobiographies throughout his
5 lifetime. The list of Frederick Douglass' accomplishments is
6 extensive and his remarkable life should be remembered and
7 celebrated throughout the State of New Jersey.

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13 in NJ.