

A SENATE RESOLUTION recognizing and supporting the planned transnational commercial truck convoys to Washington D.C. to protest ongoing government mandates related to COVID-19.

WHEREAS, On March 13, 2020, President Trump declared a national emergency concerning the COVID-19 pandemic, which made certain emergency powers available to him; and

WHEREAS, The national emergency declaration concerning the COVID-19 pandemic was set to expire on March 1, 2022 but President Biden extended the national emergency declaration on February 18, 2022; and

WHEREAS, With no other planned end-date announced, the extension will last for an additional year, until March 1, 2023; and

WHEREAS, Many Americans are dissatisfied with a continuance of the national emergency declaration concerning the COVID-19 pandemic, especially as case numbers continue to decline, vaccines become widely available, and public health restrictions are being lifted nationwide; and

WHEREAS, In response to President Biden's decision to extend the declared national emergency concerning COVID-19 and ongoing government mandates related to COVID-19, several independent groups of Americans have planned transnational convoys of commercial trucks to Washington D.C. to protest; and

WHEREAS, Many of the planned transnational commercial truck convoys have been organized transparently, with routes and planned stops being made available on the Internet and organizers making their plans known to local authorities along the route ahead of time; and

WHEREAS, As part of the national organization effort, commercial truck convoys are planning to drive through and make stops within New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, Organizers of the New Jersey convoys have coordinated with local authorities while planning events to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants in secured settings; and

WHEREAS, The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects American's rights to peacefully gather to express their shared ideas and petition the government for a redress of grievances; and

WHEREAS, The organizers of the New Jersey convoys and transnational commercial truck convoys have made sincere efforts to ensure that their events are executed in a safe and peaceful manner; and

WHEREAS, This House should recognize and support the right of American citizens to peacefully assemble to collectively express their shared views and demand government action; now, therefore,

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

1. This House recognizes and expresses its support for the planned commercial truck convoys across the United States and in New Jersey as vehicles for the expression of free speech and the right to peacefully assemble.

2. This House urges all of the participants in the planned commercial truck convoys in New Jersey and across the United States to abide by the vision of their event's organizers by participating peacefully and with deference to law enforcement officers tasked with ensuring the safety of the general public.

3. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, and each member of Congress elected from this State.

STATEMENT

This resolution expresses the Senate's support for the commercial truck convoys planned for the first week of March across the country and within New Jersey to protest ongoing government mandates related to COVID-19. Taking inspiration from the recent Freedom Convoy in Canada, organizers in the United States and New Jersey have mapped out convoy routes leading to Washington D.C. with planned stops for demonstrations and events along the way. Convoy coordinators in New Jersey and nationwide have been transparent in their planning processes and have been working with local authorities to ensure the safety of all participants. Peaceful assemblies, such as those planned as part of the convoys, are protected by the First Amendment to the United State Constitution.

In addition to supporting the planned convoys, this resolution also urges participants to participate peacefully and with deference to law enforcement officers tasked with ensuring the safety of the general public.

Recognizes and supports planned transnational commercial truck convoys to Washington D.C. to protest ongoing government mandates related to COVID-19.