

113TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. RES. 507

Designating August 7, 2014, as “National Lighthouse and Lighthouse Preservation Day”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 17, 2014

Mr. KING (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Designating August 7, 2014, as “National Lighthouse and Lighthouse Preservation Day”.

Whereas August 7, 2014, marks the 225th anniversary of the signing by President George Washington of the Act entitled “An Act for the establishment and support of lighthouses, beacons, buoys, and public piers”, approved August 7, 1789 (commonly known as the “Lighthouse Act of 1789”) (1 Stat. 53, chapter 9);

Whereas in 1789, the ninth Act of the first Congress, established a Federal role in the support, maintenance, and repair of all lighthouses, beacon buoys, and public piers necessary for safe navigation, commissioned the first Federal lighthouse, and represented the first public works act in the young United States;

Whereas the establishment of the United States system of navigational aids set the United States on a path to the forefront of international maritime prominence and established lighthouses that played an integral role in the rich maritime history of the United States, as that history spread from the Atlantic coast through the Great Lakes and the Gulf coast and Pacific States;

Whereas those iconic structures, standing at the margins of land and water, sometimes for as long as 2 centuries, have symbolized safety, security, heroism, duty, and faithfulness;

Whereas architects, designers, engineers, builders, and keepers devoted, and in some cases jeopardized, their lives for the safety of others during centuries of light tending by the United States Lighthouse Service and the United States Coast Guard;

Whereas the automation of the light system exposed the historic lighthouse towers to the ravages of time and vandalism and yet, at the same time, opened an opportunity for citizen involvement in efforts to save and restore those beacons that mark the evolving maritime history of the United States and its coastal communities;

Whereas the national lighthouse preservation movement has gained momentum over the past half century and is making major contributions to the preservation of maritime history and heritage and, through the development and enhancement of cultural tourism, to the economies of coastal communities in the United States;

Whereas the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 470w-7 et seq.), enacted on October 24, 2000, with the aid of the lighthouse preservation

community, provides an effective process administered by the General Services Administration and the National Park Service for transferring lighthouses to the best possible stewardship groups;

Whereas 2014 is the 200th anniversary of the August 24, 1814, rescue of the original copies of the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, the United States Constitution, and many irreplaceable original government documents and books from destruction when the British burned Washington, D.C. during the War of 1812 by Stephen Pleasonton, who later served as General Superintendent of Lighthouses for 32 years;

Whereas 2014 is also the 75th anniversary of when Congress dissolved the United States Lighthouse Service and turned all of its duties over to the United States Coast Guard;

Whereas although the United States Coast Guard was created in 1915 with the merger of the United States Life Saving Service and the United States Revenue Marine Service, the United States Coast Guard uses the United States Revenue Marine founding date of 1790 as its anniversary year, and thus, August 7, 2014, is also the 225th anniversary of the United States Coast Guard;

Whereas 2014 also marks the 250th anniversary of the Sandy Hook Lighthouse in New Jersey, the oldest standing lighthouse tower in the United States, which was built before the United States was a country and was still part of the British colonies;

Whereas for the past several decades, regional and national groups have formed within the lighthouse preservation

community to promote lighthouse heritage through research, education, tourism, and publications;

Whereas despite progress, many lighthouses in the United States remain threatened by erosion, neglect, vandalism, and deterioration by the elements; and

Whereas the many completed, ongoing, or planned private and public efforts to preserve lighthouses demonstrate the public support for those historic structures: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates August 7, 2014, as “National
3 Lighthouse and Lighthouse Preservation Day”;

4 (2) encourages lighthouse grounds to be opened
5 to the general public to the extent feasible; and

6 (3) encourages the people of the United States
7 to observe National Lighthouse and Lighthouse
8 Preservation Day with appropriate ceremonies and
9 activities.

○