

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 820

Designating August 7, 2026, as “National Lighthouse Day”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 30, 2026

Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. KING) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

AUGUST 7, 2026

Committee discharged; considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Designating August 7, 2026, as “National Lighthouse Day”.

Whereas August 7, 2026, will mark the 237th anniversary of the signing by George Washington of the Act entitled “An Act for the establishment and support of light-houses, beacons, buoys, and public piers”, approved August 7, 1789 (commonly known as the “Lighthouse Act of 1789”) (1 Stat. 53, chapter 9), an Act of the first Congress that established the enduring commitment of the Federal Government to maritime safety and represented the first public works legislation of the United States;

Whereas this landmark legislation emerged at a time when the United States was barely a decade removed from independence, demonstrating that the founders under-

stood the critical link between navigational safety, commerce, and the survival of the young republic;

Whereas, from the Atlantic shores to the Great Lakes and from the Gulf Coast to the Pacific frontier, the system of lighthouses and light stations of the United States has guided countless vessels through treacherous waters, enabling the expansion of trade and the growth of coastal communities that shaped the story of the United States;

Whereas these sentinel towers, standing at the intersection of land and sea, have long symbolized safety, vigilance, and faithfulness to all who venture upon the waters, and the dedicated individuals who tended their lights, often in isolation and at great personal risk, embody the finest traditions of service to others;

Whereas lighthouse keeping was rarely a solitary endeavor but rather a family calling, with wives, children, and extended kin sharing the demanding work of maintaining the light, tending the grounds, and standing watch through long nights and fierce storms, a tradition that made light stations not merely places of employment but homes where generations learned the meaning of duty and sacrifice;

Whereas among those who served were countless women, including widows who assumed keeper duties after the death of a husband, daughters who grew up tending the light alongside their fathers, and women appointed in their own right to positions that were among the first Federal non-clerical jobs open to women;

Whereas the automation of lighthouses in the United States ended the era of manned light stations and exposed these

historic structures to the threats of neglect and vandalism and the ravages of time and the elements;

Whereas chapter 3051 of title 54, United States Code (formerly known as the “National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act of 2000” (Public Law 106–355; 114 Stat. 1385)), established an effective process administered by the General Services Administration, the National Park Service, and the United States Coast Guard for transferring lighthouses to qualified stewardship groups, ensuring that these irreplaceable landmarks remain in public hands for future generations;

Whereas numerous national, regional, and local organizations have worked tirelessly to restore and preserve lighthouses in the United States, educate the public about their history, and ensure that these beacons continue to illuminate the maritime heritage of the United States;

Whereas, through the development of cultural tourism, preserved lighthouses contribute meaningfully to the economies of coastal communities across the United States, drawing visitors who come to experience the beauty and history of these iconic structures;

Whereas 2026 marks the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, known as the United States Semiquincentennial, a moment of national reflection that calls upon the people of the United States to honor the full breadth of the heritage of the United States, including the lighthouses and keepers who have guided its maritime history; and

Whereas, despite significant progress, many lighthouses across the country remain threatened by erosion, neglect,

and deterioration, underscoring the need for continued public awareness and support: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates August 7, 2026, as “National
3 Lighthouse Day”;

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

6 (3) calls upon the people of the United States
7 to observe National Lighthouse Day with ceremonies
8 and activities that celebrate the maritime heritage of
9 the United States, including visiting historic light-
10 house sites, supporting preservation efforts, and be-
11 coming involved with organizations dedicated to
12 lighthouse education and historic landmark preserva-
13 tion; and

14 (4) reaffirms the commitment of the Senate to
15 supporting the preservation and restoration of his-
16 toric lighthouses as enduring monuments to the
17 maritime history of the United States and the indi-
18 viduals who kept their lights burning.

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