

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 22, 2006

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2005—06 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 153

Introduced by Assembly Member Evans

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Aghazarian, Arambula, Baca, Bass, Benoit, Berg, Bermudez, Blakeslee, Calderon, Canciamilla, Chan, Chavez, Chu, Cogdill, Cohn, Coto, Daucher, De La Torre, DeVore, Dymally, Emmerson, Frommer, Garcia, Goldberg, Hancock, Harman, Jerome Horton, Shirley Horton, Houston, Huff, Jones, Karnette, Keene, Klehs, Koretz, La Malfa, La Suer, Leno, Leslie, Levine, Lieber, Lieu, Liu, Matthews, Maze, McCarthy, Montanez, Mullin, Nakanishi, Nava, Negrete McLeod, Niello, Nunez, Parra, Pavley, Plescia, Ridley-Thomas, Ruskin, Saldana, Salinas, Spitzer, Strickland, Torrico, Tran, Umberg, Vargas, Villines, Walters, Wolk, Wyland, and Yee)

(Coauthor: Senator Chesbro)

May 11, 2006

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 153—Relative to the 30th anniversary of the Paris Wine Tasting of 1976.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 153, as amended, Evans. Paris Wine Tasting Anniversary.

This measure would proclaim May 24, 2006, the 30th anniversary of the Paris Wine Tasting of 1976, which revolutionized California's wine industry.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, On May 24, 1976, a wine tasting known as the
2 Paris Wine Tasting of 1976, forever revolutionized California's
3 wine industry; and

4 WHEREAS, A wine merchant located in Paris, named Steven
5 Spurrier, organized the Paris Wine Tasting of 1976 as a publicity
6 stunt because he thought the French wines would easily win; and

7 WHEREAS, The panel of nine judges were all French
8 wine-tasting experts with impeccable professional credentials
9 such as Pierre Tari, secretary-general of the Association des
10 Grands Crus Classes, and Raymond Oliver, owner of Le Grand
11 Vefour restaurant, and famous French culinary writers; and

12 WHEREAS, The tasting was done blind with the wine poured
13 from neutral bottles with no labels so that the judges did not
14 recognize the wines by the bottle's characteristics; and

15 WHEREAS, The white wines were the first category judged
16 and matched transatlantic cousins French Burgundy against
17 California Chardonnay; and

18 WHEREAS, To the shock of all the judges, California wines
19 won three out of the top four in the white wine category with the
20 winner being the Napa Valley 1973 Chardonnay from Chateau
21 Montelena, which beat out the 1973 Meursault-Chames
22 Burgundy. California Chardonnays by Chalone Vineyard and
23 Spring Mountain Vineyard finished third and fourth respectively;
24 and

25 WHEREAS, After the results of the white wines had been
26 revealed, the judges began the second half of the tasting
27 competition, which matched French Bordeaux against California
28 Cabernet Sauvignon; and

29 WHEREAS, To the continued astonishment of the French
30 judges after making disparaging remarks about the wines they
31 thought to be from California, the 1973 Stag's Leap Wine Cellars
32 Cabernet Sauvignon from the Napa Valley had won the red wine
33 category; and

34 WHEREAS, Some of the French judges tried to disparage the
35 event claiming the competition was rigged and one of the judges,
36 Odette Kahn, tried to get her ballot back, and the French press
37 virtually ignored the event for months until articles were
38 published that condescended and dismissed the event; and

39 WHEREAS, While some of the French judges and French
40 press tried to disparage and conceal the results of the event, a

1 Time magazine journalist named George Taber was there and
2 witnessed the event, and broke the news to the world in the June
3 7, 1976, edition of Time magazine; and

4 WHEREAS, Prior to the Paris Wine Tasting of 1976, French
5 wines were thought to be the best wines in the world and, in fact,
6 every President of the United States from George Washington to
7 John F. Kennedy served French wines until President Lyndon B.
8 Johnson made it a decree that the White House would serve only
9 American wines; and

10 WHEREAS, The Smithsonian Institute has added a bottle of
11 Chateau Montelena Chardonnay and Stag's Leap Wine Cellars
12 Cabernet Sauvignon to their permanent collection to
13 commemorate the competition; and

14 WHEREAS, The results of the Paris Wine Tasting of 1976,
15 now known as the Judgment of Paris, cannot be understated in its
16 impact of not only California's \$40 billion wine industry but the
17 wine industry around the world; and

18 WHEREAS, All of the California wineries that participated in
19 the Paris Wine Tasting of 1976 such as Chalone Vineyard,
20 Chateau Montelena, Clos du Val, David Bruce Winery, Freemark
21 Abbey, Heitz Wine Cellars, Mayacamas Vineyards, Ridge
22 Vineyards, Spring Mountain Vineyard, and Stag's Leap Wine
23 Cellars should all be forever commended for their contributions
24 to California's wine industry and for wine around the world by
25 showing that world class wine can be produced outside of
26 France; and

27 WHEREAS, May 24, 2006, marks the 30th anniversary of the
28 Judgment of Paris, the wine tasting competition that
29 revolutionized the wine industry; now, therefore, be it

30 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
31 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature of the State of California
32 declares May 24, 2006, the 30th Anniversary of the Judgment of
33 Paris in recognition of the importance of the results of the Paris
34 Wine Tasting of 1976; and be it further

35 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit
36 copies of this resolution to the State Library and to the author for
37 appropriate distribution.

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