

## Senate Joint Resolution No. 12

### RESOLUTION CHAPTER 5

Senate Joint Resolution No. 12—Relative to elder abuse awareness.

[Filed with Secretary of State February 22, 2008.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 12, Simitian. Elder abuse awareness stamp.

This measure would request the President and the Congress of the United States to enact legislation that would authorize the United States Postmaster General to establish a special rate of postage for first-class mail, and to issue a special postage stamp, to provide funds for elder abuse prevention and awareness programs.

WHEREAS, According to the 2000 decennial census, 12 percent of the total population in the United States was 65 years of age or older, representing 35 million individuals. By the year 2030, it is estimated that the number and percentage of individuals who are 65 years of age or older will nearly double to 20 percent of the total population, or 60 million persons; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated that 4 to 6 percent of all senior citizens will become victims of some form of elder abuse, including neglect and exploitation; and

WHEREAS, The act of elder abuse, including neglect and exploitation, is considered the “crime of the 21st century”; and

WHEREAS, Fewer than 20 percent of elder abuse cases are reported to adult protective services or law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, According to the American Medical Association, seniors who are abused or mistreated are three times more likely to die earlier than seniors of the same age who are not abused or mistreated; and

WHEREAS, Although the federal government spends \$520 million on programs designed to combat violence against women, and \$6.7 billion on child abuse prevention efforts, it spends only \$153.5 million on elder abuse prevention; and

WHEREAS, To combat elder abuse, our government has the responsibility to help raise awareness in the community and fund programs that protect elders, train law enforcement, and support local and state prosecutors; and

WHEREAS, Former United States Senator John Breaux (D - Louisiana) introduced Senate Bill No. 333, known as The Elder Justice Act, which sought to provide national leadership to combat elder abuse, including neglect and exploitation; and

WHEREAS, If similar legislation is enacted, one means of funding this legislation would be to authorize and issue a special postage stamp, the

revenue from which would help fund the programs outlined in this bill. A special postage stamp for elder abuse awareness, like the breast cancer stamp, would cost postal patrons more than the face value of the stamp. Funds collected in excess of the face value of the stamp, after the postal service is reimbursed for its costs related to issuing this special postage stamp, would provide funding for elder abuse programs; and

WHEREAS, An elder abuse awareness stamp would also provide a method for all citizens to learn about, and contribute to stopping, this shocking crime; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly,* That the Legislature hereby respectfully memorializes the President and Congress of the United States to afford the public a convenient way to contribute towards the funding of elder abuse prevention and awareness programs by authorizing the United States Postmaster General to establish a special rate of postage for first-class mail, and to issue a special postage stamp regarding elder abuse prevention and awareness; and be it further

*Resolved,* That the Legislature respectfully memorializes the Congress and the President to enact appropriate legislation that would address the concerns set forth in this measure; and be it further

*Resolved,* That the Legislature respectfully memorializes other state legislatures to pass similar resolutions that memorialize the President and Congress of the United States to authorize the United States Postmaster General to establish a special rate of postage and issue a special postage stamp regarding elder abuse prevention and awareness; and be it further

*Resolved,* That a copy of this measure be transmitted to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chairpersons of the House and Senate Committees on Aging, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States; and be it further

*Resolved,* That a copy of this measure be transmitted to all of the 49 other state legislatures in the United States.