

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 10, 2010

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009—10 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 150

Introduced by Assembly Member Carter

April 6, 2010

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 150—Relative to African American Mental Health Awareness Week.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 150, as amended, Carter. African American Mental Health Awareness Week.

This measure would recognize each ~~second~~ 2nd week of February hereafter as African American Mental Health Awareness Week.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 ~~WHEREAS, According to the Surgeon General of the United~~
- 2 ~~States, mental illnesses are more prevalent in the African American~~
- 3 ~~community compared to other cultures in the United States; and~~
- 4 *WHEREAS, According to the National Alliance on Mental*
- 5 *Health, some mental illnesses are more prevalent in the African*
- 6 *American community as compared to other cultures in the United*
- 7 *States; and*
- 8 WHEREAS, African Americans suffer as a result of suicide,
- 9 depression, misdiagnosis, over use of involuntary hospitalization,
- 10 incarceration, and self-medication via substance abuse; and
- 11 WHEREAS, The Office of Minority Health reports that African
- 12 Americans are 30 percent more likely to report having serious
- 13 psychological distress than Whites, yet Whites are more likely to

1 receive treatment for a major depressive episode than African
2 Americans; and

3 WHEREAS, Suicide is the third leading cause of death for all
4 teens in the United States, and the third leading cause of death for
5 African American youth 15 to 24 19 years of age, inclusive. The
6 suicide rate among African Americans within the last 30 years has
7 increased dramatically. Between 1980 and 1995 the suicide rates
8 for African American youth 10 to 14 years of age, inclusive, has
9 increased by 233 percent, compared to 120 percent for comparable
10 Whites; and

11 WHEREAS, In the United States African Americans account
12 for only 2 percent of psychiatrists, 2 percent of psychologists, and
13 4 percent of social workers; and

14 ~~WHEREAS, African American patients are at a higher risk of~~
15 ~~misdiagnosis or overdiagnosis than White patients; and~~

16 WHEREAS, Children in the foster care and child welfare system
17 are more likely to develop mental illness, and African American
18 children comprise 40 45 percent of the foster care system; and

19 WHEREAS, Prison inmates are at high risk for developing
20 mental illness and less likely to be diagnosed with a mental illness,
21 and half of all prisoners in the United States are African American;
22 and

23 WHEREAS, The African American Mental Health Coalition is
24 committed to empowering African American communities by
25 promoting the benefits of mental health services, through education,
26 advocacy, policy development, raising awareness, and decreasing
27 the stigma surrounding mental health; and

28 WHEREAS, The African American Mental Health Coalition
29 has introduced creative and innovative community-based programs
30 and partnered with a variety of local community organizations to
31 help prevent improper interventions, misdiagnosis, involuntary
32 incarceration, and decrease the stigma related to mental health
33 issues in the African American community; and

34 WHEREAS, The African American Mental Health Coalition is
35 recognized as an important partner in the success of African
36 American Health Awareness Week, through its continued efforts
37 to provide services, information, and advocacy to individuals
38 throughout the African American community, and to make positive
39 changes by increasing awareness and eliminating barriers to care;
40 now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
2 *thereof concurring,* That the Legislature recognizes each second
3 week of February hereafter as African American Mental Health
4 Awareness Week; and be it further
5 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
6 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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