

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 10

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 42

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 10—Relative to Railroad Safety Month.

[Filed with Secretary of State June 2, 2009.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 10, Liu. Railroad Safety Month.

This measure would designate September as “Railroad Safety Month.”

WHEREAS, Freight train operators, Amtrak, commuter rail operators, and multiple heavy and light rail systems run through densely populated areas of California on a daily basis; and

WHEREAS, An incident occurs on railroad property in the United States every 120 minutes; and

WHEREAS, There are over 11,000 at-grade public rail grade crossings located within 52 counties and 400 cities in California; and

WHEREAS, The State of California has the highest number of highway-rail grade crossing accidents in the United States. The number of accidents has increased from 142 in 2003 to 162 in 2007; and

WHEREAS, The State of California also has the highest number of pedestrian trespass fatalities with 122 accidents reported in 2007; and

WHEREAS, Trains have the right-of-way 100 percent of the time over vehicles and pedestrians; and

WHEREAS, The Federal Railroad Administration, California Department of Transportation, California Public Utilities Commission, California Operation Lifesaver, and freight and passenger rail operators are working to improve railroad safety and to educate children and adults of the dangers around railroad operations; and

WHEREAS, State and federal safety programs, including the Grade Separation Program, the Automatic Grade Crossing Protection Maintenance Fund, and the Federal Railway-Highway Crossing Improvement Program, all raise rail safety awareness and have contributed to the decline in train accidents this year as compared to the same period last year; and

WHEREAS, With growth in passenger and freight rail traffic expected to double in 15 years and more than 10 million new residents arriving in the state over the same time period, current funding levels are insufficient to keep pace with needed rail safety improvements, including grade separations, overpasses, warning devices, gates, and signals; and

WHEREAS, Railroad operators, motor vehicle operators, and pedestrians must work together to reduce the likelihood of railroad-vehicle and railroad-pedestrian accidents; and

WHEREAS, September is back-to-school month for most children in California and because many of these children must cross railroad tracks to get to school, it is important to reinforce the rail safety message with children and their caretakers; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby officially designates September of each year as “Railroad Safety Month” in California and commends local, state, and federal government, industry, and citizen efforts to improve railroad crossing safety and support increased funding for rail safety, and strongly urges all Californians to be cautious and safe around all railroad tracks; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.