

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 34

**Introduced by Assembly Member Lara
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Alejo)**

March 8, 2011

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 34—Relative to ethnic studies.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 34, as introduced, Lara. Ethnic studies programs.

This measure would formally endorse the invaluable work of California's ethnic studies programs, and their faculty, staff, and students. The measure would recognize the leadership provided by the beneficiaries of those programs, and would support the continuation of ethnic studies programs in California's institutions of higher education.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The genesis and salience of ethnic studies as an
2 academic discipline encompass research, scholarship, and programs
3 that study and teach the experiences, history, culture, and heritage
4 of African Americans, Asian Americans, Chicanas and Chicanos,
5 Latinas and Latinos, Native Americans, and other persons of color
6 in the United States; and
7 WHEREAS, Formal ethnic studies programs and departments
8 at California's universities are a response to a student-led
9 movement dating back to the 1960s, including demonstrations,
10 student protests, and hunger strikes, where students, faculty, and
11 community members demanded university courses that were
12 relevant to them and their communities; and

1 WHEREAS, The formalization of ethnic studies fostered greater
2 demand and recognition of the need for faculty and staff from
3 diverse communities, allowing for broader representation at
4 California’s universities; and

5 WHEREAS, Ethnic studies have grown into a respected
6 academic field, complete with professional organizations,
7 institutionalized departments and related programs across the
8 United States, and numerous research journals and award-winning
9 publications; and

10 WHEREAS, The study of ethnic populations has grown to
11 include comparative and international approaches to the study of
12 ethnicity and the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Ethnic studies acknowledges the role of America’s
15 diverse racial and ethnic peoples as equal actors in the history of
16 California and the United States; and

17 WHEREAS, California is a “majority minority” state with the
18 largest percentage, 57 percent, of minority people in the United
19 States; and

20 WHEREAS, A broader education on diverse racial and ethnic
21 groups provides a fuller and deeper understanding of California
22 and United States history and helps promote greater understanding
23 among people from different backgrounds; and

24 WHEREAS, Ethnic studies departments, programs, and related
25 projects promote constructive communication and collaborative
26 efforts between different and diverse groups and encourage the
27 demonstration of respect, understanding, appreciation, equality,
28 and dignity; and

29 WHEREAS, Long-standing attacks on ethnic studies
30 departments, programs, and related projects, and the recent increase
31 of attacks in particular, misrepresents the intentions and serious
32 intellectual and scholarly commitments of the ethnic studies
33 departments; and

34 WHEREAS, Support for ethnic studies departments, programs,
35 and related projects, including budgetary commitments, will allow
36 for the continued guidance and teaching of a new generation of
37 students who will greatly impact and positively influence California
38 policy and government; now, therefore, be it

39 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
40 *thereof concurring,* That the Legislature of the State of California

1 formally endorses the invaluable work of California's ethnic studies
2 departments, programs, and related projects, and their faculty,
3 staff, and students; and be it further

4 *Resolved*, That the Legislature of the State of California also
5 duly recognizes the leadership provided by the beneficiaries of
6 these programs who have contributed greatly to the academic rigor,
7 prominence, and distinguishing qualities of California's colleges
8 and universities and the vitality of other public and private
9 institutions, including the California state government; and be it
10 further

11 *Resolved*, That the Legislature of the State of California supports
12 the continuation of ethnic studies departments, programs, and
13 related projects in California's institutions of higher education;
14 and be it further

15 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
16 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.