

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 25, 2011

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 47

Introduced by Assembly Member Davis

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Achadjian, Alejo, Allen, Ammiano, Atkins, Beall, Bill Berryhill, Block, Blumenfield, Bonilla, Bradford, Brownley, Buchanan, Butler, Charles Calderon, Campos, Carter, Chesbro, Conway, Cook, Dickinson, Eng, Feuer, Fletcher, Fong, Fuentes, Galgiani, Garrick, Gatto, Gordon, Grove, Hall, Harkey, Hayashi, Roger Hernández, Hill, Huber, Hueso, Huffman, Jones, Lara, Logue, Bonnie Lowenthal, Ma, Mendoza, Miller, Mitchell, Monning, Morrell, Nestande, Nielsen, Pan, Perea, John A. Pérez, V. Manuel Pérez, Portantino, Silva, Skinner, Smyth, Solorio, Swanson, Torres, Valadao, Wieckowski, Williams, and Yamada)

April 7, 2011

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 47—Relative to the 50th anniversary of service by African American justices in the California Courts.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 47, as amended, Davis. Courts: 50th anniversary of service by African American justices.

This measure would acknowledge the 50th anniversary of service by African American justices in the California Courts, and would encourage all Californians to share in statewide and local celebrations throughout the year to recognize the contributions and diversity of these and other judicial trailblazers. The bill would also call upon the leadership of the judicial, legislative, and executive branches of government, and the greater legal, educational, and justice communities, to sponsor and

participate in educational and outreach activities that highlight the work of the justices of the California Courts of Appeal and the California Supreme Court.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, In 1961, Associate Justice Edwin L. Jefferson, a
2 native of Mississippi and a University of Southern California,
3 Gould School of Law graduate, became the first African American
4 to serve on a California Court of Appeal, where he served with
5 distinction in the Second Appellate District, Division Four, from
6 1961 to 1975; and

7 WHEREAS, Edwin L. Jefferson was appointed to the Los
8 Angeles Municipal Court in 1941 by Governor Culbert Olson,
9 further marking the year 2011 as the 70th anniversary of the
10 appointment of California’s first African American judge, and he
11 served honorably in that court until he was elevated to the Superior
12 Court of Los Angeles in 1949 by Governor Earl Warren; and

13 WHEREAS, At his retirement in 1975, Justice Jefferson was
14 still the only African American appellate justice serving on the
15 California Courts of Appeal when Governor Edmund G. Brown,
16 Jr., appointed Justice Jefferson’s brother, Bernard S. Jefferson, to
17 succeed him; and

18 WHEREAS, Justice Jefferson opened the door for the historic
19 appointments of other judicial pioneers to the California Supreme
20 Court and Courts of Appeal, including Wiley W. Manuel, a
21 graduate of the University of California, Hastings College of the
22 Law, who became the first African American associate justice of
23 the California Supreme Court, serving with the utmost distinction
24 from 1977 to 1981; and

25 WHEREAS, Associate Justice Clinton White, a graduate of the
26 University of California Berkeley School of Law (Boalt Hall),
27 became the first African American to serve as a presiding justice
28 of a California Court of Appeal, heading the First Appellate
29 District, Division Three, from 1978 to 1995; and

30 WHEREAS, Presiding Justice Arleigh Maddox Woods, a
31 graduate of Southwestern University School of Law, became the
32 first African American female justice to serve on a California Court
33 of Appeal, where she served in the Second Appellate District,
34 Division Four, from 1980 to 1995; and

1 WHEREAS, On the occasion of the 50th anniversary year, the
2 state of California congratulates the 14 justices who have served
3 on appellate courts throughout the state—six of whom are currently
4 serving—and the three African American justices who have served
5 on the California Supreme Court, all having heard and decided
6 landmark legal cases and having set legal precedents that remain
7 in force today; and

8 WHEREAS, The historic tenures of these justices include that
9 of Associate Justice John J. Miller, who has the distinct tribute of
10 having served as a member of the California State Legislature prior
11 to his appointment to the Court of Appeal, First Appellate District
12 in 1978 by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., the same who
13 currently serves as Governor of the State of California—and where
14 Justice Miller served until 1985; and

15 WHEREAS, Justice Miller, a graduate of Howard University
16 School of Law, served honorably in the California State Assembly
17 from 1967 to 1978, representing the 17th Assembly District, later
18 renumbered as the 13th Assembly District, holding the leadership
19 post of Assembly Minority Leader from 1970 to 1971, and holding
20 numerous standing subcommittee and select committee leadership
21 posts, including judiciary, criminal justice, criminal procedure,
22 ways and means, governmental administration, local government,
23 and resources and land use, to name a few; and

24 WHEREAS, In addition, while serving the Assembly, Assembly
25 Member Miller’s outstanding contributions to the administration
26 of justice in California included his service as a member of the
27 Judicial Council of California from 1975 to 1978, where he
28 supported the causes of improving the administration of the courts
29 and increasing access to justice for all Californians; and

30 WHEREAS, These men and women of distinction are among
31 the thousands of justices, judges, and subordinate judicial officers
32 who serve admirably each day in courts throughout the state of
33 California, whose service inspires the trust and confidence of
34 Californians from all walks of life, and who share a common goal
35 of ensuring that all persons have equal access to the courts and
36 court proceedings and programs; and

37 WHEREAS, As a strategic goal of California’s judicial branch,
38 the judicial branch community strives to understand and be
39 responsive to the needs of court users from diverse cultural
40 backgrounds and will work toward ensuring that the makeup of

1 California’s judicial branch will reflect the diversity of the state’s
2 residents; now, therefore, be it

3 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
4 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature joins all Californians in
5 acknowledging the occasion of this 50th anniversary historical
6 milestone and encourages all Californians to share in statewide
7 and local celebrations throughout the year to recognize the
8 contributions and diversity of these and other judicial trailblazers;
9 and be it further

10 *Resolved*, That the Legislature calls upon the leadership of the
11 judicial, legislative, and executive branches of government, and
12 the greater legal, educational, and justice communities, including
13 the courts, bar associations, universities, law schools, legal
14 education pipeline programs, and legal aid providers, to sponsor
15 and participate in educational and outreach activities that highlight
16 the work of the justices of the California Courts of Appeal and the
17 California Supreme Court; and be it further

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