

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 11, 2011

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 25, 2011

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

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**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

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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~~ *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~~ 1994; 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

1 of Appeal, where she served in the Second Appellate District,  
2 Division Four, from 1980 to 1995; and

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

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

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

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

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

39 WHEREAS, As a strategic goal of California’s judicial branch,  
40 the judicial branch community strives to understand and be

1 responsive to the needs of court users from diverse cultural  
2 backgrounds and will work toward ensuring that the makeup of  
3 California’s judicial branch will reflect the diversity of the state’s  
4 residents; now, therefore, be it

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

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

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