

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 56

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 106

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 56—Relative to the American flag.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 28, 2011.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 56, Hill. Relative to the American flag.

This measure would recognize the 61st anniversary of National Flag Day, honor the 51st anniversary of the flying of the current American flag, and would encourage all Californians to celebrate the occasion with appropriate activities.

WHEREAS, For more than two centuries, the American flag has been a banner of hope for generation after generation of Americans; and

WHEREAS, The flag is a symbol of a country that has grown from 13 colonies to a united nation of 50 sovereign states; and

WHEREAS, Continental Congress member Francis Hopkinson designed the first Stars and Stripes. The first flag of the United States was authorized by Congressional Resolution on June 14, 1777, resolving that it be made of 13 stripes, alternating red and white, and that the union be 13 white stars in a blue field, representing a new constellation; and

WHEREAS, Since the first American flag, several congressional acts and Presidential Executive orders have altered the shape, design, and arrangement of the flag, and allowed for additional stars and stripes to be added to reflect the admission of each new state; and

WHEREAS, In 1794, Congress passed an act changing the American flag so that it contained 15 stripes and 15 stars; and

WHEREAS, In 1818, President Monroe signed legislation requiring that the American flag have 13 stripes and a star for each state in the union. Stars for newly added states would be applied to the flag on July 4 of the following year; and

WHEREAS, Flag makers were able to use imaginative designs to accommodate new stars on the flag until 1912, when President Taft issued an Executive order that established rows of stars as the standard design; and

WHEREAS, On June 14, 1885, a 19-year-old Wisconsin schoolteacher named Bernard J. Cigrand assigned his students essays on the flag and its significance, in commemoration of the congressional resolution of 1777; and

WHEREAS, Cigrand’s lifelong effort to bring about national recognition of the day culminated in the issuance of a proclamation by President Wilson on May 30, 1916, calling for a nationwide observance of Flag Day; and

WHEREAS, In 1949, President Truman signed an act of Congress designating the 14th day of June every year as National Flag Day; and

WHEREAS, The 48-star American flag, represented by the traditional 13 stripes and six rows of eight stars, was the official flag from 1912 until 1959; and

WHEREAS, On January 3, 1959, Alaska was formally granted statehood and the 49-star American flag, represented by the traditional 13 stripes and seven rows of seven stars, became the official flag when it was raised over Independence Hall on July 4, 1959; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii became this country's 50th state on August 21, 1959, requiring that a new 50-star flag be designed as the official American flag; and

WHEREAS, President Eisenhower unveiled the new 50-star flag on August 21, 1959, at a ceremony commemorating Hawaii's statehood; and

WHEREAS, The 50-star flag, the current Stars and Stripes, became the official American flag on July 4, 1960, with a design of 13 stripes and 50 stars, represented by five rows of six stars alternating with four rows of five stars; and

WHEREAS, Despite the numerous designs of the American flag, they have all stood for the United States Constitution, the American way of life, our collective past achievements, and our dreams for the future; and

WHEREAS, On June 14, 2011, National Flag Day, the 50-star American flag celebrated its 51st anniversary as the official Stars and Stripes, representing the longest period that any fixed flag design has been used; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature recognizes the 61st anniversary of National Flag Day, honors the 51st anniversary of the flying of the current American flag, and encourages all Californians to celebrate the occasion with appropriate activities; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly provide copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.