

## Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 16

### RESOLUTION CHAPTER 10

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 16—Relative to Women’s History Month and women’s suffrage.

[Filed with Secretary of State April 4, 2011.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 16, Evans. Women’s history.

This measure would celebrate Women’s History Month and the achievement of women’s suffrage in California 100 years ago.

WHEREAS, In 1896, women in California had lost their first contest for the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, In 1910, a progressive Republican administration was swept into power and woman suffragists seized the opportunity and successfully lobbied the Legislature to put the issue on the ballot; and

WHEREAS, Senate Constitutional Amendment 8, authored by Senator Bell, was introduced to put the question to voters of whether women should be allowed to vote; and

WHEREAS, Supporters only had eight months to organize their campaign to win voter approval; and

WHEREAS, Suffragists spoke to voters in the streets and from automobiles, held mass rallies, picnics, and small meetings, addressed congregations, unions, factory workers, women’s clubs, and spoke to any audience that they could find; and

WHEREAS, A popular opening line when addressing a crowd was: “I appeal to you as a mother, a grandmother, as a garment worker, a school teacher, a trained nurse,” or as the case might have been; and

WHEREAS, To publicize their cause as widely as possible, the suffragists produced pin-back buttons, pennants, playing cards, posters, shopping bags, billboards, and electric signs; and

WHEREAS, Over three million pieces of literature and over 90,000 “Votes for Women” buttons were distributed in southern California alone; and

WHEREAS, Suffragist leaders, who anticipated strong oppositions by saloon and business interests in the cities who feared prohibition, concentrated their forces on the rural districts, organizing automobile tours and press to reach distant voters in the remote corners of our great state; and

WHEREAS, Ten thousand people gathered for a final rally in San Francisco with fireworks and a band concert; and

WHEREAS, On election day, October 10, 1911, when the measure was defeated soundly in the San Francisco Bay area and passed just barely in Los Angeles; suffragist organizers believed they had been defeated; and

WHEREAS, When the long count was finally completed several days later, Equal Suffrage passed by only 3,587 votes, an average majority of one vote in each precinct in the state, making the final tally 125,037 to 121,450, rural districts contributing immensely to the victory; and

WHEREAS, With the passage of votes for women in California, the number of women with full suffrage in the United States doubled, and San Francisco became the most populous city in the world in which women could vote; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring,* That, as we celebrate Women's History Month in March, we commemorate the centennial of women's suffrage in California.