

**Introduced by Senators Pavley, Correa, De León, Evans, Kehoe,
Runner, Steinberg, Vargas, and Wolk**

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Harkey, Jeffries, Ma, and Monning)

March 30, 2011

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 29—Relative to California Autism Awareness Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 29, as introduced, Pavley. California Autism Awareness Month.

This measure would designate April 2011 as California Autism Awareness Month, would affirm the Legislature's commitment to the important issues related to autism spectrum disorders (ASDs), would emphasize that each and every individual with an ASD is a valued and important member of our society, would recognize and commend the parents and relatives of individuals with ASDs for their sacrifice and dedication in providing for the special needs of individuals with ASDs, would recognize and commend the work of all nonprofit organizations that are contributing to the well-being of individuals with autism and their families, would stress the need to identify children with ASD and begin early intervention services immediately after a childhood diagnosis, and would stress the need for these intervention services, as well as supports, for individuals with ASDs and their families in an integrated, seamless, comprehensive, and competent manner that is delivered across the child's lifespan.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) now impact
- 2 one out of every 110 children, and one in every 70 boys, in the
- 3 United States and are the fastest growing serious developmental

1 disability, making these disorders more common than pediatric
2 cancer, diabetes, and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS)
3 combined; and

4 WHEREAS, The prevalence of autism is increasing by 10 to
5 17 percent annually and ASDs cost the nation over \$35 billion per
6 year, and is estimated to exceed \$200 billion in 10 years; and

7 WHEREAS, Most school districts in California have seen a
8 doubling of students with ASDs in the past five years. The number
9 of Californians with ASDs who are served by the State Department
10 of Developmental Services now exceeds 50,000, which is a number
11 that has increased fivefold since 1998, and is more than 12 times
12 what it was in 1987; and

13 WHEREAS, Many Californians are not adequately informed
14 about ASDs and the value and importance of early identification,
15 assessment, and treatment of these disorders; and

16 WHEREAS, Current scientific research demonstrates that the
17 early identification of and intervention with children with ASDs
18 can result in significant positive outcomes in many children with
19 ASDs; and

20 WHEREAS, The Legislature supports the goal of increasing
21 research to learn the root causes of autism and identify the best
22 methods of early intervention and treatment, expanding programs
23 for individuals with autism across their lifespan, and promoting
24 understanding of the special needs of people with autism; and

25 WHEREAS, Parents and family members have made invaluable
26 contributions through their commitment, care, and advocacy, to
27 important advances in research, education, and treatment for
28 individuals with ASDs; and

29 WHEREAS, Public information and awareness efforts are of
30 paramount importance in accelerating early identification efforts
31 and the proliferation of early intervention programs and services;
32 and

33 WHEREAS, The Senate Select Committee on Autism and
34 Related Disorders has appointed regional autism taskforces that
35 are comprised of consumers and their family members, advocates,
36 providers, researchers, and other experts in the area of ASDs, and
37 other stakeholders, to provide assistance to, and to support the
38 work of, the select committee. Senator Steinberg, as Chair of the
39 Senate Select Committee on Autism and Related Disorders, has
40 established the Statewide Coordinating Council of Autism

1 Taskforces that consists of the leadership of the regional autism
2 taskforces and has provided input and integrated recommendations
3 for consideration by the Senate Select Committee on Autism and
4 Related Disorders; and

5 WHEREAS, California has been the established leader in
6 providing services and support for the early identification,
7 assessment, intervention, education, and treatment of individuals
8 with ASDs. This leadership began with the passage of landmark
9 state legislation, such as the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities
10 Servicer Act in 1969 and Assembly Bill 3854 (Chapter 1527 of
11 the Statutes of 1974), relating to autism and public education; and

12 WHEREAS, In 2007, the Legislative Blue Ribbon Commission
13 on Autism submitted its report, “An Opportunity to Achieve Real
14 Change for Californians with Autism Spectrum Disorders,” which
15 provided specific findings and recommendations; and

16 WHEREAS, In 2009, the Senate Committee on Rules, pursuant
17 to Senate Rule 12.5, established the Senate Select Committee on
18 Autism and Related Disorders and this committee has appointed
19 regional autism taskforces; now, therefore, be it

20 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
21 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature designates April 2011 as
22 California Autism Awareness Month, affirms the Legislature’s
23 commitment to the important issues related to ASDs, and
24 emphasizes that each and every individual with an ASD is a valued
25 and important member of our society; and be it further

26 *Resolved*, That the Legislature recognizes and commends the
27 parents and relatives of individuals with ASDs for their sacrifice
28 and dedication in providing for the special needs of individuals
29 with ASDs; and be it further

30 *Resolved*, That the Legislature recognizes and commends the
31 work of all of the nonprofit organizations that are contributing to
32 the well-being of individuals with autism and their families; and
33 be it further

34 *Resolved*, That the Legislature stresses the need to identify
35 children with ASDs and to begin early intervention services
36 immediately after a child has been diagnosed with autism; and be
37 it further

38 *Resolved*, That the Legislature also stresses the need to provide
39 these intervention services, as well as supports, for individuals
40 with ASDs and their families in an integrated, seamless,

- 1 comprehensive, and competent manner that is delivered across the
- 2 child's lifespan; and be it further
- 3 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
- 4 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.