
Introduced by Senator Liu
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Atkins)

August 17, 2011

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 55—Relative to California Runaway and Homeless Youth Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 55, as introduced, Liu. California Runaway and Homeless Youth Month.

This measure would designate November 2011 as California Runaway and Homeless Youth Month, and would recognize the need for individuals, schools, communities, businesses, local governments, and the state to take action on behalf of runaway and homeless youth in California.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Runaway and homeless youth are young people
2 between 12 and 24 years of age who have the least access to
3 essential opportunities and supports; and
4 WHEREAS, The prevalence of runaway and homelessness
5 among youth is staggering, with studies nationally suggesting that
6 between 1.6 and 2.8 million youth live on the street for at least
7 one night in a one-year period; and
8 WHEREAS, An estimated 200,000 youth under 18 years of age,
9 and thousands more who are 18 to 24 years of age, experience
10 homelessness each year in California; and
11 WHEREAS, An overwhelming majority of runaway and
12 homeless youth have been expelled from their homes by their
13 families; physically, sexually, and emotionally abused at home;

1 discharged from foster care and other state custodial systems
2 without adequate transition plans; separated from their parents by
3 death or divorce; too poor to secure their own basic needs; and
4 ineligible or unable to access adequate medical or mental health
5 resources; and

6 WHEREAS, Runaway and homeless youth who live on the
7 street are victims of physical abuse, sexual exploitation, and crime
8 in untold numbers; and

9 WHEREAS, These youths are on the street because they feel
10 there are no other options open to them; and

11 WHEREAS, Youths who “age out” of the foster care system
12 are at an increased risk of homelessness, and represent an estimated
13 25 to 40 percent of the youth who are currently homeless; and

14 WHEREAS, Providing safe, stable, and permanent housing for
15 runaway and homeless youth is a family, community, state, and
16 national priority; and

17 WHEREAS, The future well-being of our state depends on the
18 value we place on our youth, and, in particular, on our actions to
19 provide the most vulnerable young people in the state with
20 opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities they
21 need to find and maintain stable housing and develop into healthy
22 and productive adults; and

23 WHEREAS, The number of effective programs providing
24 services and support to runaway and homeless youth in California
25 is a fraction of what is needed to fully address the needs of these
26 young people; and

27 WHEREAS, The California Coalition for Youth has operated
28 the California Youth Crisis Line (1-800-843-5200), 24 hours a
29 day, seven days a week, for over 24 years as the state’s only
30 emergency response system for youth in crisis; and

31 WHEREAS, November is National Runaway and Homeless
32 Youth Awareness Month; and

33 WHEREAS, The California Coalition for Youth, along with
34 other community-based organizations, providers, and advocates,
35 are sponsoring California’s second annual Runaway and Homeless
36 Youth Month to increase awareness and action on behalf of youth
37 who are at risk or currently living on the street; and

38 WHEREAS, Awareness of the tragedy of youth homelessness
39 and its causes must be heightened to ensure greater support for

1 effective programs aimed at preventing homelessness and helping
2 youth remain off the streets; now, therefore, be it

3 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
4 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature recognizes the need for
5 individuals, schools, communities, businesses, local governments,
6 and the state to take action on behalf of runaway and homeless
7 youth in California; and be it further

8 *Resolved*, That the Legislature hereby designates the month of
9 November 2011 as California Runaway and Homeless Youth
10 Month.