

Introduced by Senator Anderson

April 26, 2012

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 87—Relative to people of faith.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 87, as introduced, Anderson. People of faith.

This measure would resolve that the Legislature affirms, among other things, that tolerance by the government toward people of faith is constitutionally guaranteed and necessary to allow an unimpeded flow of good that positively impacts and transforms lives.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The First Amendment to the United States
2 Constitution provides, “Congress shall make no law respecting an
3 establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;
4 or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of
5 the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government
6 for a redress of grievances”; and

7 WHEREAS, Alexis de Tocqueville observed that Americans
8 “combine the notions of religion and liberty so intimately in their
9 minds, that it is impossible to make them conceive of one without
10 the other”; and

11 WHEREAS, Thomas Jefferson wrote to the Rev. Samuel Miller
12 on January 23, 1808, “Everyone must act according to the dictates
13 of his own reason, and mine tells me that civil powers alone have
14 been given to the President of the United States, and no authority
15 to direct the religious exercises of his constituents”; and

16 WHEREAS, Franklin Roosevelt stated, “Where freedom of
17 religion has been attacked, the attack has come from sources

1 opposed to democracy. Where democracy has been overthrown,
2 the spirit of free worship has disappeared. And where religion and
3 democracy have vanished, good faith and reason in international
4 affairs have given way to strident ambition and brute force”; and

5 WHEREAS, Religious sponsored schools educate more than
6 5,488,000 students enrolled in preschool and kindergarten and
7 grades 1 to 12, inclusive, which is 10 percent of all United States’
8 students, in 33,366 schools, which is 25 percent of all schools in
9 the United States; and

10 WHEREAS, Two thousand two hundred eighty orphanages and
11 5,297 children’s homes are provided and maintained by the
12 Catholic Church alone; and

13 WHEREAS, Over 2,500 children from 19 countries found new
14 homes with adoptive families through All God’s Children
15 International; and

16 WHEREAS, Holt International is an adoption agency that strives
17 to give children the love they need and deserve regardless of race
18 and nationality. It is the largest adoption agency in the United
19 States that in its 55 years of existence has brought together 40,000
20 children with adoptive families in the United States. In 2010, Holt
21 International placed 749 children in American homes, and served
22 36,972 children throughout the world, though with expenses of
23 only \$23,940,959; and

24 WHEREAS, Close to one million students and some 65,000
25 professors serve in the 230 religiously affiliated universities and
26 colleges in the United States; and

27 WHEREAS, Over 110 United States colleges and universities
28 were founded by Catholic sisters. Elizabeth Ann Seton, who was
29 a widow, mother, founder of Sisters of Charity, and the first
30 American-born saint, established the nation’s first free Catholic
31 school; and

32 WHEREAS, In 5,774 elementary schools and 1,206 secondary
33 schools, and 1,822 schools with a waiting list for admission,
34 Catholic school student enrollment for the current academic year
35 is 2,065,872 with 1,467,694 enrollments in elementary and middle
36 school, and 598,178 enrollments in secondary school. Minority
37 student Catholic school enrollment is at 30.2 percent of the total
38 enrollment, which is 624,878 students, and non-Catholic enrollment
39 is 14.9 percent of the total enrollment, which is 307,458 students;
40 and

1 WHEREAS, Religious institutions, with an operating budget
2 close to \$100 billion, run parishes, primary and secondary schools,
3 nursing homes, retreat centers, hospitals, and other charitable
4 establishments, and employ more than one million workers; and

5 WHEREAS, The Catholic Church demonstrates its commitment
6 to educate children, particularly within the inner cities and urban
7 areas, where today 43 percent of the schools are located despite
8 population losses and great financial difficulties in maintaining
9 them; and

10 WHEREAS, German immigrants, who formed the Lutheran
11 Church Missouri Synod in the mid-1800s, came to the United
12 States to find a place where they were free to exercise their
13 religious beliefs and to live out their faith with vigor and
14 confessional purity. A unique community of believers, they grew
15 and quickly built schools, churches, hospitals, and orphanages
16 across the nation. Over the past century and a half, the Lutheran
17 Church has grown into a national church body with over 2.3 million
18 members in more than 6,200 congregations across the United
19 States, providing more than 1,000 grade schools and high schools,
20 1,300 early childhood centers, 10 colleges and universities, and
21 two seminaries. Its congregations operate the largest Protestant
22 parochial school system in America; and

23 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod sustains
24 relationships and active mission work in 89 countries around the
25 world. In the last five years, the Lutheran Church has awarded
26 more than \$35 million through more than 900 domestic and
27 international grants for emergency response and disaster relief,
28 including putting up the first million dollars and continuing to
29 provide finance for the Nehemiah Project in New York. The
30 Nehemiah Project has continued over the years to provide home
31 ownership for thousands of families, many of them headed by
32 single women, and maintained an agency in New Orleans, Camp
33 Restore, which rebuilt over 4,000 homes after Katrina, through
34 the blood, sweat, and tears of volunteers. The church's Lutheran
35 Malaria Initiative has touched the lives of 1.6 million people in
36 East Africa, especially those affected by disease, women and
37 children. The church has also cared for the unmet health needs of
38 thousands of people in dozens of the world's least developed
39 countries, donating more than \$1 million in needed medicines in
40 their mercy work overseas in the last few years alone, responding

1 to virtually every recent major natural disaster, both domestically
2 and abroad, using volunteer medical teams that were literally
3 covered in the blood of disaster victims in Haiti and the tsunami
4 that decimated Indonesia and India. The Lutheran Church also
5 provides funding and leads programs for domestic community
6 development, urban housing, and health and nutrition; and

7 WHEREAS, Religion in the United States is defined by a great
8 adherence level and vibrant diversity in religious beliefs and
9 practices. According to recent surveys, 83 percent of Americans
10 identify with a religious denomination, 40 percent state that they
11 regularly attend services, and 58 percent say that they pray weekly;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, The National Council of Churches lists 68,503,456
14 members in the United States today; and

15 WHEREAS, Unlike most developed nations, a majority of
16 Americans claim that religion plays a very important role in their
17 lives; and

18 WHEREAS, Many faiths have flourished in the United States,
19 which makes the United States one of the most religiously diverse
20 countries in the world. These faiths span the country's multicultural
21 immigrant heritage and those founded within the country; and

22 WHEREAS, Heroism was humbly displayed by Catholic nuns
23 during the Civil War, when over 600 sisters from 21 different
24 communities nursed both Union and Confederate soldiers, all the
25 way through the San Francisco Earthquake, the Civil Rights
26 Movement, and Hurricane Katrina; and

27 WHEREAS, No matter the struggle and controversy at the time,
28 Catholic sisters have opened orphanages, schools, hospitals,
29 colleges, universities, and provided other social services for
30 millions of Americans; and

31 WHEREAS, Sister Ignatia Gavin, CSA, who successfully
32 advocated that alcoholism be treated as a medical condition,
33 provided vital support for Alcoholics Anonymous during its
34 establishment; and

35 WHEREAS, Catholic nuns have contributed to science, such
36 as pioneering research in infrared spectrography by Sister Miriam
37 Stimson, which supported the discovery of DNA; and

38 WHEREAS, Since 1980, while working for social justice and
39 human rights, nine American sisters have been murdered overseas;
40 and

1 WHEREAS, In 2003, there were more than 15.4 million
2 emergency room visits and more than 86 million outpatient visits
3 to Catholic hospitals, especially impacting people living in areas
4 where the only health facility is a Catholic one and low-income
5 people who routinely rely on emergency rooms at charitable
6 hospitals for primary health care; and

7 WHEREAS, Care provided by Catholic hospitals includes 629
8 hospitals, 12 percent of the total hospitals in the United States,
9 with 120,311 beds, 5,512,632 admissions, 28,298,787 inpatient
10 days, 100,032,817 outpatient days, \$98.6 billion in expenses,
11 640,894 in full-time equivalent staff, 2,486,769 Medicare
12 discharges, and 976,802 Medicaid discharges, treating about one
13 in six Americans in a Catholic health care facility each year; and

14 WHEREAS, Medical Assistance Programs, an
15 interdenominational Christian organization, supports work at more
16 than 650 clinics and hospitals. It helps people of all faiths in 118
17 countries and uses 99.1 percent of its funds on program expenses;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Lutheran Services in America, an alliance of
20 Lutheran Church bodies and their over 300 social ministry
21 organizations, join hands to love and serve our neighbors and create
22 opportunities for people throughout the United States and the
23 Caribbean. These organizations work on health care, aging,
24 disability, community development, housing, and related issues,
25 and have aggregated annual incomes over \$16.6 billion, touching
26 the lives of one in 50 Americans each year; and

27 WHEREAS, \$100.63 billion, 35 percent of total contributions
28 in 2010, went to faith-based charities, including churches. Religious
29 groups received over one-third of all contributions in the United
30 States, and faith-based donations increased 0.8 percent from the
31 previous year; and

32 WHEREAS, Catholic Charities USA's members bring hope and
33 support for approximately 10 million people a year regardless of
34 religious, social, or economic background. They provide a myriad
35 of essential services in their communities, ranging from health
36 care and job training to food and housing; and

37 WHEREAS, In the United States, Catholic Charities USA
38 provides one of the largest voluntary social service networks; and

39 WHEREAS, In 2010, 3,301 local Catholic Charities offices, as
40 reported by 171 Catholic Charities USA member agencies and

1 affiliates, provided services to 10,270,292 unduplicated clients,
2 offering client services 15,448,529 times. They provide food,
3 building strong communities, strengthening families, respond to
4 disasters, and meet basic human needs; and

5 WHEREAS, In 2010, according to a survey conducted by the
6 Chronicle of Philanthropy, Catholic Charities USA was one of
7 only four charities among the top 400 charitable organizations to
8 experience an increase in donations in 2009; and

9 WHEREAS, Christian Blind Mission International granted
10 \$112,982,826 in aid last year, whose teams of volunteers included
11 medical professionals to treat the blind and perform thousands of
12 operations to restore those who live with disabilities around the
13 world; and

14 WHEREAS, Matthew 25 Ministries (M25M) is an international
15 humanitarian relief organization helping the poorest of the poor
16 locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally regardless of
17 race, creed, or political persuasion by providing basic necessities,
18 skill development, and disaster relief across the United States and
19 worldwide. Since its founding in 1990, M25M has sent 71,717,889
20 pounds of aid across the United States and into more than 35
21 countries worldwide; and

22 WHEREAS, World Vision is a Christian humanitarian
23 organization dedicated to working with children, families, and
24 their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by
25 tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. World Vision provides
26 emergency assistance to children and families affected by natural
27 disasters and civil conflict, and works with communities to develop
28 long-term solutions to alleviate poverty and advocate for justice
29 on behalf of the poor. In the 2010 fiscal year, World Vision was
30 able to give \$549.5 million towards approximately 80 disaster
31 response efforts, with nearly 80 percent of their funding coming
32 from private sources; and

33 WHEREAS, The mission of the Church World Service is to
34 erase hunger and poverty while promoting peace and justice
35 throughout the world by introducing sustainable local development
36 initiatives to the individuals they seek to help, including disaster
37 relief, and refugee assistance all around the world which is
38 delivered from 36 refugee resettlement offices in affiliates in 21
39 states. Since 1946, the Church World Service has found new homes
40 for more than 450,000 refugees in the United States, and from July

1 2010 to June 2011 has spent \$82,029,444 toward their mission
2 with 46.7 percent of their entire expenses going toward refugee
3 resettlement and assistance as well as 19.4 percent toward disaster
4 relief and recovery, with 3.7 percent of their \$82,029,444 in
5 expenses going to administrative services; and

6 WHEREAS, While the Salvation Army was first founded in
7 1867 in London under the name “The Christian mission,” it soon
8 grew to an international organization providing several services
9 to the community, and through just the 2011 Red Kettle Campaign
10 alone, the Salvation Army was able to raise a record \$147.6 million
11 that it uses in its various ministries, including a prisoner
12 rehabilitation program that allows for prisoners to be released into
13 the custody of the Salvation Army to receive assistance in
14 job-training, employment opportunities all while cooperating with
15 parole rules, and extending services for the prisoner’s family; and

16 WHEREAS, The Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA)
17 was first founded by George Williams as a place where young men
18 could study the Bible and be protected from life on the streets.
19 Today the YMCA is in more than 10,000 neighborhoods all across
20 the United States and is made up of about 20,000 full-time staff
21 and 500,000 volunteers dedicated to working with 9 million youth
22 and 12 million adults across the country for, in 2010, only
23 \$90,261,269; and

24 WHEREAS, The YMCA offers afterschool programs for
25 kindergarten through middle school aged children, which offers
26 them activities to explore their interests and talents while providing
27 a safe and healthy place to learn foundational skills, develop
28 healthy, trusting relationships, and build self-reliance by learning
29 the values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. The
30 Achievers Program helps teens of color raise their academic
31 standards, develop a positive sense of self, build character, explore
32 diverse college and career options, and learn from role models
33 who inspire them to greater heights; and

34 WHEREAS, For over 100 years the American Jewish
35 Community (AJC) continues its efforts to promote pluralistic and
36 democratic societies where all minorities are protected. AJC is an
37 international think tank and advocacy organization that attempts
38 to identify trends and problems early, and take action. Its key areas
39 of focus are combating anti-Semitism and all forms of bigotry,
40 promoting pluralism and shared democratic values, supporting

1 Israel's quest for peace and security, advocating for energy
2 independence, and strengthening Jewish life. It spends \$40,715,000
3 in expenses, 10 percent to administration, 14 percent to marketing,
4 and 76 percent to program services; and

5 WHEREAS, The Jewish Federations of North America represent
6 157 Jewish Federations and over 300 network communities, which
7 raise and distribute more than \$3 billion annually for social welfare,
8 social services, and educational needs; and

9 WHEREAS, The Lutheran World Relief donates 90 cents of
10 every dollar on 100 local partners and their program services. They
11 collaborate to improve health and education in 35 countries each
12 year by training local women and men to produce local foods, dig
13 low-cost wells, and protect and restore their local environments;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, The Christian Foundation for Children and Aging
16 (CFCA) has brought hope to families living in poverty in 22
17 countries for almost 30 years. CFCA is backed by 250,000 sponsors
18 who are supporting more than 300,000 children, youth, and elderly
19 worldwide. Despite a difficult economic climate, total contributions
20 and revenues exceeded \$109.3 million in 2010, increasing from
21 the pervious year; and

22 WHEREAS, In 2010, Islamic Relief USA (IRUSA) provided
23 \$167,924,852 in aid to many communities without regard to race,
24 religion, social, or economic status. Islamic Relief USA provides
25 emergency disaster relief, and developed projects to support
26 education, income generation, orphans, health and nutrition, and
27 water and sanitation. In addition to its international work, IRUSA
28 also supports domestic projects to help disadvantaged communities
29 in the United States through community grants, toy fairs for
30 children, financial assistance, and healthcare; and

31 WHEREAS, Habitat for Humanity International is a nonprofit,
32 ecumenical Christian organization, that served a record 81,399
33 families worldwide in fiscal year 2011 through construction,
34 rehabilitation, and repairs. Believing that every man, woman and
35 child should have a simple, decent place to live, they continue to
36 work to eliminate substandard housing and homelessness
37 worldwide and provide adequate, affordable shelter; and

38 WHEREAS, The United Methodist Committee on Relief, a
39 nonprofit global humanitarian aid organization of the United

1 Methodist Church, works in more than 80 countries worldwide to
2 alleviate suffering caused by war, conflict, or natural disaster; and
3 WHEREAS, Child Fund International spent \$187.2 million
4 dollars on services for impoverished children. Its programs help
5 these children to become strong and positive young adults, parents,
6 and leaders in their communities; and

7 WHEREAS, Since 1985 Christian Action has built 462 winter
8 homes for Tibetan families and 10 schools and two clinics. In total,
9 there are over 20,000 people directly helped by Christian Action
10 each year. Starting in 2008, Christian Action offered over 200
11 scholarships that pay for school fees, boarding fees, and teaching
12 materials to help students with financial difficulties to complete
13 their studies; and

14 WHEREAS, Since 1883 St. Vincent de Paul, one of the oldest
15 and most successful charitable organizations in the world, made
16 up of nearly 700,000 volunteers and programs in 142 countries,
17 which together provides more than \$595 million in services, has
18 helped over 14 million people. In 2010, St. Vincent de Paul
19 provided \$593,932,658 in services through their food pantries,
20 thrift stores, dining halls, housing assistance, and disaster relief
21 programs; and

22 WHEREAS, The Knights of Columbus awarded \$1.5 million
23 scholarships to 642 students in the 2010–11 academic year to
24 students studying at various Catholic colleges and universities in
25 the United States, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and the
26 Philippines through several scholarship programs. Since its
27 establishment the Knights of Columbus has donated \$1.406 billion
28 to charity work, and provided more than 653 million hours of
29 volunteer service in support of charitable initiatives through
30 partnerships with the Special Olympics, the Global Wheelchair
31 Mission, and Habitat for Humanity; and

32 WHEREAS, The Church of Latter Day Saints established the
33 Perpetual Education Fund in 2001 to aid those in developing
34 regions make a better life for themselves through higher education.
35 To date, 50,000 participants in over 50 countries have benefited
36 from the program with most participants completing their education
37 in 2.4 years and gaining employment; and

38 WHEREAS, Since 1998 hundreds of thousands of Mormon
39 Helping Hands volunteers have donated millions of hours of service
40 to their communities. These volunteers in their trademark yellow

1 shirts help people whose lives have been affected by natural
2 disasters and other emergencies. Mormon Helping Hands
3 volunteers also partner with government and nonprofit
4 organizations to support and improve the communities where they
5 live; and

6 WHEREAS, Christians, such as Lyman Beecher, Harriet
7 Beecher Stowe, and William Lloyd Garrison, have dedicated their
8 lives to bringing social justice to America and worked tirelessly
9 to expand and strengthen the abolitionist movement; and

10 WHEREAS, The Southern Christian Leadership Conference,
11 whose support came primarily from the church, worked to advance
12 the cause of civil rights in America but in a nonviolent manner.
13 The church was a vital part of the lives of African Americans in
14 the South, and church leaders played a noteworthy role in Southern
15 black communities; and

16 WHEREAS, According to Dr. Bernard LaFayette, the Civil
17 Rights movement and the broader freedom struggle became the
18 cornerstone of social change in modern America because of the
19 guiding force of religion and principles rooted in faith and
20 Judeo-Christian ethics. For the better part of a century, the
21 faith-based struggle to eradicate racial discrimination and injustice
22 in the United States has been a major source of spiritual and more
23 regeneration, of hope and renewal, for oppressed people across
24 the globe; now, therefore, be it

25 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
26 *thereof concurring,* That the Legislature affirms all of the
27 following:

28 (a) Faith-based organizations of all creeds and denominations
29 serve their neighbors in need, and have a vested interest in our
30 society with much to contribute to our future; and

31 (b) Throughout our nation's history, the work carried out, very
32 often at personal cost, by people of faith continues to benefit and
33 serve our neighbors in need throughout our communities; and

34 (c) The unique spirit of service and sacrifice lived out by the
35 faithful are the fruit of values and vision set into action, benefitting
36 and serving the lives of many in this country and this world; and

37 (d) The charity, kindness, and goodwill given to so many people
38 is directly shaped and developed by religion, and they thrive as a
39 result of the giving spirit nourished by religion's free practice and
40 teaching; and

1 (e) Religious organizations and the faith they inspire have
2 cultivated countless good deeds of mercy and love, which are a
3 valuable asset that helps to address the many needs in our society;
4 and

5 (f) The freedom to allow all faiths to flourish and the protected
6 liberty of religious conscience profoundly shape America's history
7 and destiny as religious people fulfill their mission, calling, and
8 commitment to serve; and

9 (g) Religious freedom affirms and sustains much strength and
10 health in the day-to-day lives of millions, while governmental
11 intrusion upon it stifles the good being done and plugs the
12 wellspring of life lived for the benefit for others; and

13 (h) Tolerance by the government toward people of faith is
14 constitutionally guaranteed and necessary to allow an unimpeded
15 flow of good that positively impacts and transforms lives; and

16 (i) An inestimable value and contribution to our American
17 standard of living comes from the free hearts of those whose faith
18 and conscience who, motivated by the love of God, impel them to
19 carry out care for their neighbor; and

20 (j) Constitutional protection from governmental discrimination
21 or dictates against conscience ensures a strong and vibrant
22 democracy; and

23 (k) The government may not prescribe morals, teachings,
24 practice, or beliefs for churches or any other religious body, for it
25 has no right to do so, but is instead to allow for the free exercise
26 of our First Amendment religious rights; and

27 (l) Acts of mercy come from conscience, and many consciences
28 are patterned by their faith, moving with the confidence and
29 courage that comes from conviction; and

30 (m) Firmly upholding the right of conscience and cherishing
31 the exercise of religious independence and expression of religious
32 belief as American foundations animate the freedom that belongs
33 to all, that we may live in liberty and happiness; and be it further

34 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
35 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.