

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY AUGUST 20, 2013

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

House Resolution

No. 22

**Introduced by Assembly ~~Member~~ Members John A. Pérez and
Weber**

August 5, 2013

House Resolution No. 22—Relative to the March on Washington
50th anniversary.

1 WHEREAS, The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom
2 on August 28, 1963, was one of the largest rallies for human rights
3 in United States history and called for civil and economic rights
4 for African Americans; and

5 WHEREAS, The March on Washington included musical
6 performances by Marian Anderson, Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, and
7 Mahalia Jackson, and a series of speeches by various civil rights
8 leaders, including Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish religious leaders,
9 as well as *now Congressman* John Lewis and the only female
10 speaker, Josephine Baker, who introduced Rosa Parks during her
11 remarks; Baker; and

12 WHEREAS, At the March on Washington, Reverend Dr. Martin
13 Luther King, Jr., standing in front of the Lincoln Memorial,
14 delivered one of the most famous speeches in American history,
15 his “I Have a Dream” speech, advocating racial harmony and social
16 justice; and

17 WHEREAS, The March on Washington was organized by a
18 group of civil rights, labor, and religious organizations, under the
19 theme “jobs and freedom,” with an estimated 200,000 to 300,000
20 people participating; and

1 WHEREAS, The 1963 March on Washington played an
2 important part in the rapidly expanding civil rights movement, and
3 it also marked the 100th anniversary of the signing of the
4 Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln; and

5 ~~WHEREAS, The March on Washington is widely credited with~~
6 ~~helping to pave the way for passage of the Civil Rights Act of~~
7 ~~1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and~~

8 WHEREAS, The March on Washington was planned and
9 initiated by A. Philip Randolph, the President of the Brotherhood
10 of Sleeping Car Porters -- the first predominantly black labor union.
11 He was also President of the Negro American Labor Council and
12 Vice President of the AFL-CIO; and

13 ~~WHEREAS, In 1957, when~~ *When* schools in the South resisted
14 school integration following *Brown v. Board of Education*,
15 Randolph organized a Prayer Pilgrimage with Martin Luther King,
16 Jr., and in 1958 and 1959, Randolph organized youth marches for
17 integrated schools in Washington, D.C.; and

18 WHEREAS, Randolph inspired the “Freedom Budget,”
19 sometimes called the “Randolph Freedom Budget,” which aimed
20 to deal with the economic problems facing the African American
21 community, particularly workers and the unemployed; and

22 WHEREAS, Bayard Rustin was the chief organizer of the March
23 on Washington and instrumental in organizing its logistics. He
24 drafted off-duty police officers to be marshals and bus captains to
25 direct traffic, and scheduled the podium speakers; and

26 WHEREAS, Rustin was an American leader in social
27 movements for civil rights, nonviolence, and ~~gay rights~~; *rights and*
28 *became a leading strategist in the civil rights movement from 1955*
29 *to 1968, helping to organize the Southern Christian Leadership*
30 *Conference to strengthen Martin Luther King, Jr.’s leadership*
31 *and promote the philosophy and practice of nonviolent resistance;*
32 and

33 ~~WHEREAS, Rustin became a leading strategist and activist in~~
34 ~~the civil rights movement from 1955 to 1968, helping to organize~~
35 ~~the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to strengthen Martin~~
36 ~~Luther King, Jr.’s leadership and promote the philosophy and~~
37 ~~practice of nonviolent resistance, which he had observed while~~
38 ~~working with Gandhi’s movement in India; and~~

39 WHEREAS, ~~Despite the shunning of Rustin by some civil rights~~
40 ~~leaders, when the moment came for the unprecedented March on~~

1 Washington, Randolph pushed Rustin forward as the logical choice
2 to organize it; and

3 WHEREAS, Commemorating the 1963 March on Washington
4 affirms our nation’s and our state’s commitment to achieving the
5 social and economic justice sought by the marchers and their vision
6 of social equality, opportunity, and racial harmony embodied in
7 the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s captivating “I Have A
8 Dream” speech; and

9 ~~WHEREAS, In his remarks, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther~~
10 ~~King, Jr. exhorted, “Let freedom ring” across the nation and~~
11 ~~concluded with, “And when this happens, when we allow freedom~~
12 ~~to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet,~~
13 ~~from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that~~
14 ~~day when all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews~~
15 ~~and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands~~
16 ~~and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, ‘Free at last! Free~~
17 ~~at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!’”; now, therefore,~~
18 ~~be it~~

19 ~~Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, That~~
20 ~~Wednesday, August 28, 2013, be observed as the official memorial~~
21 ~~of the 50th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs~~
22 ~~and Freedom; and be it further~~

23 ~~WHEREAS, Bayard Rustin proclaimed the demands of the March~~
24 ~~on Washington to be “effective civil rights legislation,” an end to~~
25 ~~segregation “in every school district in the year 1963,” “the~~
26 ~~enforcement of the Fourteenth Amendment” to the United States~~
27 ~~Constitution, a ban on “discrimination in all housing supported~~
28 ~~by federal funds,” “an increase in the national minimum wage so~~
29 ~~that men may live in dignity,” and that “all of the rights that are~~
30 ~~given to any citizen be given to black men and men of every~~
31 ~~minority group” including a strong Fair Employment Practices~~
32 ~~Commission; and~~

33 ~~WHEREAS, The March on Washington is widely credited with~~
34 ~~helping to pave the way for passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964~~
35 ~~and the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and~~

36 ~~WHEREAS, The Civil Rights Act of 1964 laid the foundation of~~
37 ~~civil rights legislation in the United States when it outlawed major~~
38 ~~forms of discrimination against racial, ethnic, national, and~~
39 ~~religious minorities, and women; and~~

1 *WHEREAS, In addition, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 became the*
2 *landmark federal legislation in the United States to prohibit*
3 *discrimination in voting. This act, echoing the language of the*
4 *Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, prohibits*
5 *states and local governments from imposing any “voting*
6 *qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or*
7 *procedure ... to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the*
8 *United States to vote on account of race or color”;* and

9 *WHEREAS, In recent years, states have enacted voting laws*
10 *that could potentially disenfranchise voters; now, therefore, be it*

11 *RESOLVED, By the Assembly of the State of California, That*
12 *the Assembly commemorates the 50th anniversary of the 1963*
13 *March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom and how it served*
14 *as a catalyst for the passage of landmark legislative reforms, such*
15 *as the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964;*
16 *and be it further*

17 *Resolved, That the sacrifices made by the leaders and*
18 *participants of the March on Washington 50 years ago are*
19 *recognized and honored for their role in the advancement of civil*
20 *rights and social justice in the United States; and be it further*

21 *Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies*
22 *of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.*