

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY FEBRUARY 25, 2014

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 91

Introduced by Assembly Member Nazarian
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Ammiano, Atkins, Bloom,
Dababneh, Quirk-Silva, Ting, Wagner, and Weber)
(Coauthors: Senators Mitchell and Yee)

February 4, 2014

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 91—Relative to the Persian New Year.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 91, as amended, Nazarian. Persian New Year.
This measure would recognize the Persian New Year celebration.
Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Nowrūz, meaning the “New Day” is the name of
2 the New Year in the Persian calendar; and
3 WHEREAS, Nowrūz marks the first day of spring and the
4 beginning of the year in the Persian calendar. It is celebrated on
5 the day of the astronomical Northward equinox, which usually
6 occurs on March 20 or the following day depending on where it
7 is observed; and
8 WHEREAS, In Persian mythology, King Jamshid is credited
9 with the founding of Nowrūz, while others suggest that it was
10 founded by Zoroaster himself, although there is no clear date of
11 its origin. Celebrating the Vernal equinox may also have been an
12 old Babylonian tradition known before 2340 B.C.; and

1 WHEREAS, Nowrūz is celebrated and observed principally in
2 Iran and has spread to other parts of the world, including parts of
3 Central Asia, *the* Caucasus, Northwestern China, the Crimea, and
4 some groups in the Balkans. In Iran, Nowrūz is an official holiday
5 lasting for 13 days during which most national functions, including
6 schools, are off and festivities take place. Also the Canadian
7 ~~parliament~~ *Parliament*, by unanimous consent, passed a bill on
8 March 30, 2009 to add Nowrūz to the national calendar of Canada;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, The most important activity in the celebration of
11 Nowrūz is setting the “haft-seen table” which literally means a
12 table of seven items that start with the letter “s.” The table often
13 includes items such as sumac (crushed spice of berries), senjed
14 (sweet dry fruit of a lotus tree), serkeh (vinegar), and seeb (apples);
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Nowrūz invites us to contemplate nature’s power
17 of renewal and rejuvenation, to look more deeply, not just into the
18 green world outside, but at our human nature as well; and

19 WHEREAS, For the people celebrating Nowrūz, it is a time to
20 appreciate their rich heritage and to move forward with hope for
21 a prosperous new year ahead filled with health, wealth, love, joy,
22 and success; ~~now therefore, be it and~~

23 *WHEREAS, According to figures from the 2000 United States*
24 *Census, over one-half of all Iranian immigrants in the United*
25 *States lived in the State of California. In 2000, that figure was 55.9*
26 *percent or 158,613 residents. The states with the next largest*
27 *Iranian immigrant populations were New York, with 17,323*
28 *residents or 6.1 percent of the population, Texas, with 15,581*
29 *residents or 5.5 percent of the population, Virginia, with 10,889*
30 *residents or 3.8 percent of the population, and Maryland, with*
31 *9,733 residents or 3.4 percent of the population; and*

32 *WHEREAS, The Iranian population in California has grown to*
33 *over 200,000 residents according to the 2010 United States Census.*
34 *However, the Iranian Community believes the correct number may*
35 *be four times that amount.*

36 *WHEREAS, According to the latest United States Census, the*
37 *largest community of Iranian descent in the United States resides*
38 *in California, concentrated in the Los Angeles and Beverly Hills*
39 *area, with 158,613 residents, a number greater than the Iranian*
40 *populations in the next 20 states combined; and*

1 *WHEREAS, The Small Business Administration conducted a study*
2 *in 2008 that found that Iranian immigrants were among the top*
3 *20 immigrant groups with the highest rate of business ownership,*
4 *contributing substantially to the national economy; and*

5 *WHEREAS, Iranian Americans have founded and served in*
6 *senior leadership positions of many major American companies;*
7 *and*

8 *WHEREAS, The Los Angeles City Council designated the*
9 *intersection of Westwood Boulevard and Wilkins Avenue in West*
10 *Los Angeles as “Persian Square.” The first Persian business in*
11 *the city opened in 1974 on the corner of Westwood Boulevard and*
12 *Wilkins Avenue. Since then there has been an increase of Persian*
13 *businesses and residents into the area. Many of the businesses on*
14 *Westwood Boulevard, between Wilshire Boulevard and Ohio*
15 *Avenue, are owned and operated by people of Persian cultural*
16 *identity; now, therefore, be it*

17 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
18 *thereof concurring, That the Legislature joins the Persian and other*
19 *communities throughout the state in celebrating March 20, 2014,*
20 *as the beginning of the Persian New Year and extends best wishes*
21 *for a peaceful and prosperous Nowrūz to all Californians; and be*
22 *it further*

23 *Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies*
24 *of this resolution to the authors for appropriate distribution.*