

Introduced by Senator Liu

April 1, 2013

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 29—Relative to California Runaway and Homeless Youth Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 29, as introduced, Liu. California Runaway and Homeless Youth Month.

This measure would designate the month of November 2013 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 runaways and homelessness
- 5 among youth is staggering, with studies suggesting that nationally
- 6 between 1.6 and 1.8 million youth up to 24 years of age experience
- 7 homelessness every year; and
- 8 WHEREAS, Based on national surveys and California’s youth
- 9 population, an estimated 200,000 youth under 18 years of age, and
- 10 thousands more who are 18 to 24 years of age, are homeless for
- 11 one or more days each year; and
- 12 WHEREAS, An overwhelming majority of runaway and
- 13 homeless youth have been expelled from their homes by their
- 14 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, Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT)
7 youth make up a disproportionate share of the homeless youth
8 population, with estimates suggesting that LGBT youth
9 compromise over 40 percent of the homeless youth population
10 despite compromising only 10 percent of the general youth
11 population; and

12 WHEREAS, Runaway and homeless youth who live on the
13 street are victims of physical abuse, sexual exploitation, and crime
14 in untold numbers; and

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

17 WHEREAS, Youths who “age out” of the foster care system
18 are at an increased risk of homelessness, and represent an estimated
19 20 percent of the 20,000 youth who leave foster care and are
20 currently homeless; and

21 WHEREAS, Providing safe, stable, and permanent housing for
22 runaway and homeless youth is a family, community, state, and
23 national priority; and

24 WHEREAS, The future well-being of our state depends on the
25 value we place on our youth, and, in particular, on our actions to
26 provide the most vulnerable young people in the state with
27 opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities they
28 need to find and maintain stable housing and develop into healthy
29 and productive adults; and

30 WHEREAS, The number of effective programs providing
31 services and support to runaway and homeless youth in California
32 is a fraction of what is needed to fully address the needs of these
33 young people; and

34 WHEREAS, The California Coalition for Youth has operated
35 the California Youth Crisis Line (1-800-843-5200), 24 hours a
36 day, seven days a week, for over 25 years as the state’s only
37 emergency response system for youth in crisis; and

38 WHEREAS, November is National Runaway and Homeless
39 Youth Awareness Month; and

1 WHEREAS, The California Coalition for Youth, along with
2 other community-based organizations, providers, and advocates,
3 is sponsoring the third annual California Runaway and Homeless
4 Youth Month to increase awareness and action on behalf of youth
5 who are at risk or currently living on the street; and

6 WHEREAS, Awareness of the tragedy of youth homelessness
7 and its causes must be heightened to ensure greater support for
8 effective programs aimed at preventing homelessness and helping
9 youth remain off the streets; now, therefore, be it

10 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
11 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature recognizes the need for
12 individuals, schools, communities, businesses, local governments,
13 and the state to take action on behalf of runaway and homeless
14 youth in California; and be it further

15 *Resolved*, That the Legislature hereby designates the month of
16 November 2013 as California Runaway and Homeless Youth
17 Month; and be it further

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