

Introduced by Senator Corbett

April 2, 2013

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 32—Relative to Hindu American Awareness and Appreciation Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 32, as introduced, Corbett. Hindu American Awareness and Appreciation Month.

This measure would designate the month of October 2013 as California Hindu American Awareness and Appreciation Month to recognize and acknowledge the significant contributions made by Californians of Hindu heritage to the state.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, California and the nation have been influenced by
2 the extraordinary cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity
3 of its residents; and

4 WHEREAS, Of the over one billion Hindus worldwide, more
5 than 2 million Hindu Americans live across the nation, and the
6 State of California is home to the largest Hindu American
7 population in the United States; and

8 WHEREAS, Hindu Americans in California represent diverse
9 ethnic backgrounds, including individuals of Indian, Pakistani,
10 Bangladeshi, Malaysian, Indonesian, Afghani, Nepali, Bhutanese,
11 Sri Lankan, Fijian, Caribbean, and European descent; and

12 WHEREAS, California and our nation have greatly benefited
13 by Hindu Americans, especially through yoga, meditation, Vedanta
14 philosophy, ayurvedic medicine, classical Indian music, art, and
15 dance; and

1 WHEREAS, Swami Vivekananda is credited with officially
2 introducing Hinduism to the United States in 1893 at the World
3 Parliament of Religions in Chicago, and in 1900 he arrived in San
4 Francisco and founded the Vedanta Society; and

5 WHEREAS, Hindu Americans and the Vedanta philosophy
6 have significantly influenced notable American intellectuals such
7 as Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman,
8 J.D. Salinger, Christopher Isherwood, Aldous Huxley, Huston
9 Smith, and Joseph Campbell; and

10 WHEREAS, Hindu Americans believe in promoting knowledge
11 and education for all and as a group have the highest education
12 rate in the nation; and

13 WHEREAS, Almost three-quarters of Hindu Americans are
14 college graduates and nearly half of Hindu Americans have
15 postgraduate degrees; and

16 WHEREAS, Hindu Americans share the entrepreneurial spirit
17 of America, have been pioneers and leaders in Silicon Valley, and
18 have particularly excelled in the fields of information technology,
19 science, medicine, law, and business; and

20 WHEREAS, Hindu Americans have founded roughly 10 percent
21 of Silicon Valley start-ups in California, while comprising less
22 than 1 percent of the United States' population; and

23 WHEREAS, The first Hindu American elected to Congress,
24 Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii, is a United States military veteran and
25 took the oath of office on January 3, 2013, on a copy of the
26 Bhagavad Gita, which is the most well known and widely read
27 text of the many sacred texts of Hinduism; and

28 WHEREAS, The first Hindu temple in the United States was
29 built in San Francisco, California, and at the dedication of the
30 temple on January 7, 1906, it was proclaimed to be the "First Hindu
31 Temple in the whole Western World"; and

32 WHEREAS, There are now over 50 Hindu temples throughout
33 California, and the San Francisco Bay Area is home to over 20
34 Hindu temples; and

35 WHEREAS, Hindu Americans in cities throughout California
36 celebrate numerous holidays and festivals, such as Diwali, which
37 celebrates the victory of good over evil and knowledge over
38 ignorance;

39 WHEREAS, Hindu temples, organizations, and individuals in
40 California actively engage in seva, or selfless service towards their

1 fellow human beings through charity, public service, and the
2 provision of free medical and legal services; and

3 WHEREAS, Ahimsa, which is the Sanskrit word for noninjury
4 or nonviolence, is a central principle for Hindu Americans in
5 California, and it provides the ethical foundation for vegetarianism,
6 environmentalism, and harmonious living; and

7 WHEREAS, Hindu Americans have helped promote the shared
8 American ideals of tolerance, pluralism, and religious freedom,
9 which are inherent to their beliefs and respect the diversity of all
10 faiths, and the Vedas, the 5000 year old texts of Hindu Americans,
11 provide the basis for these core principles: “Truth is one, the wise
12 call it by many names” [Ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti]; now,
13 therefore, be it

14 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
15 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature hereby designates the
16 month of October 2013 as California Hindu American Awareness
17 and Appreciation Month; and be it further

18 *Resolved*, That the Legislature recognizes and acknowledges
19 the significant contributions made by Californians of Hindu
20 heritage to our state, and by adoption of this resolution, seeks to
21 increase awareness and understanding about the Hindu American
22 community; and be it further

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