

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 amended, 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

1 philosophy, ayurvedic medicine, classical Indian music, art, and
2 dance; and

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

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

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

15 WHEREAS, Almost three-quarters of Hindu Americans are
16 college graduates and nearly ~~half~~ *one-half* of Hindu Americans
17 have postgraduate degrees; and

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

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

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

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

34 WHEREAS, There are now over 50 Hindu temples throughout
35 California, and the San Francisco Bay ~~Area~~ *area* is home to over
36 20 Hindu temples; and

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

1 WHEREAS, Hindu temples, organizations, and individuals in
2 California actively engage in seva, or selfless service towards their
3 fellow human beings through charity, public service, and the
4 provision of free medical and legal services; and

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

9 WHEREAS, Hindu Americans have helped promote the shared
10 American ideals of tolerance, pluralism, and religious freedom,
11 which are inherent to their beliefs and respect the diversity of all
12 faiths, and the Vedas, the ~~5000~~ 5,000 year old texts of Hindu
13 Americans, provide the basis for these core principles: “Truth is
14 one, the wise call it by many names” [Ekam sat viprah bahudha
15 vadanti]; now, therefore, be it

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

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

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