

## Senate Joint Resolution No. 13

### RESOLUTION CHAPTER 132

Senate Joint Resolution No. 13—Relative to immigration.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 20, 2013.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 13, Yee. Immigration reform: F3 and F4 visa categories.

This measure would memorialize the President and Congress of the United States to support immigration reform efforts that do not hurt families by eliminating or negatively impacting the F3 and F4 visa categories, or that end the discrimination against same-sex couples. The measure would memorialize the President and Congress to take a comprehensive, bipartisan, and well-reasoned approach to immigration issues that maintains the fair and appropriate priority for family reunification, including same-sex partners.

WHEREAS, Immigrants are a vibrant, productive, and vital part of California's growing economy, diverse cultural fabric, and changing demographics; and

WHEREAS, Immigrants fuel California's economy through their labor and entrepreneurship, comprising approximately one-third of California's labor force and figuring prominently in key economic sectors such as agriculture, construction, manufacturing, and services; and

WHEREAS, Federal legislation has been proposed that offers a path to citizenship for many of the 11 million undocumented immigrants already living in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Unfortunately, the proposed law eliminates the F4 visa category so that United States citizens will no longer be able to sponsor their brothers and sisters. It also places an age cap on the F3 visa category so that United States citizens can only sponsor their adult children if they are not more than 30 years old; and

WHEREAS, Eliminating the ability of United States citizens to sponsor their loved ones such as brothers, sisters, and adult married children 31 years of age and older, runs counter to the family values that are a cornerstone of our nation. It is also counterproductive since it limits the ability of immigrant families to contribute to the entrepreneurship and innovation that have been vital drivers of economic growth throughout our nation's history; and

WHEREAS, Unfortunately, the proposed law also does not offer same-sex couples the same preference as heterosexual couples; and

WHEREAS, The inability of United States citizens to sponsor their same-sex partner will divide families, and this practice clearly holds LGBT families in a second-class status; and

WHEREAS, People with their families are happier, healthier, and more able to succeed than those living apart for years on end. By pooling resources, families can do together what they cannot do alone—start businesses, create jobs, and contribute more to the general welfare; and

WHEREAS, Eliminating the F4 and altering the F3 visa categories will have a profound impact on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. In November 2012, there were 4.3 million people in the family immigration backlog, nearly one-half of whom were from Asian countries. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders sponsored over 40 percent of all family-based visas in 2010. Some Asian immigrants have been forced to wait as long as 23 years to be reunited with their families in the United States, largely due to the limitations and inefficiencies of our legal immigration system; and

WHEREAS, One and one-half million Latinos are on the waiting list for family reunification, making up one-third of the backlog, with some waiting as long as 20 years; and

WHEREAS, We support the expansion of availability of H-1B visas as well as other visas necessary to bring needed workers into our country to grow our economy; and

WHEREAS, We commend the efforts of the federal government in working towards a comprehensive reform measure that is compassionate to the immigrant, protects our nation's economy, and safeguards our national security while upholding the dignity of the United States Constitution. However, we strongly encourage congressional representatives to reexamine the possible elimination of the F4 visa category and modification of the F3 visa category; and

WHEREAS, A bipartisan, comprehensive workable immigration reform package must be based not only on a path towards permanent residency and citizenship, but also on the promotion of strong and healthy families who are the core of our vibrant nation; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly,* That the Legislature of the State of California respectfully memorializes the President and the Congress of the United States to support immigration reform efforts that do not hurt families by eliminating or negatively impacting the F3 and F4 visa categories, or that end the discrimination against same-sex couples; and be it further

*Resolved,* That the Legislature urges the President and the Congress of the United States to take a comprehensive, bipartisan, and well-reasoned approach to solving our nation's broken immigration system, while maintaining the fair and appropriate priority for family reunification, including same-sex partners; and be it further

*Resolved,* That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and the Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the

Senate, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

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