

Introduced by Senators Yee and Wright
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Holden)

July 10, 2013

Senate Joint Resolution No. 14—Relative to the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 14, as introduced, Yee. Voting Rights Act of 1965.

This measure would urge the Congress and President of the United States to enact amendments to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that would restore Section 4 of the act with a new coverage formula and update the entire act in order to address ongoing violations of voting rights in the states.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, The Fifteenth Amendment to the United States
2 Constitution ensures that the right of citizens of the United States
3 to vote is not denied on account of race or color; and
4 WHEREAS, The Fifteenth Amendment to the United States
5 Constitution grants the Congress of the United States the authority
6 to protect the right to vote; and
7 WHEREAS, The Congress of the United States has exercised
8 its authority to protect the right to vote by passing landmark
9 legislation of the civil rights era known as the Voting Rights Act
10 of 1965 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 1971 et seq.); and
11 WHEREAS, Sections 4 and 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965
12 have contributed to the immense progress in protecting and
13 expanding the right to vote over the past few decades by ensuring
14 that state and local election practices are just and fair; and

1 WHEREAS, The Supreme Court of the United States, in *Shelby*
2 *County v. Holder*, held that the coverage formula in Section 4 of
3 the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is unconstitutional in violation of
4 the Tenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and can
5 no longer be used as a basis for requiring jurisdictions to subject
6 proposed changes in voting procedures to federal preclearance
7 under Section 5 of the act; now, therefore, be it
8 *Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of*
9 *California, jointly*, That the Legislature urges the Congress and
10 President of the United States to enact amendments to the Voting
11 Rights Act of 1965 that would restore Section 4 with a new
12 coverage formula and update the entire act in order to address
13 ongoing violations of voting rights in the states; and be it further
14 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
15 this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United
16 States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the
17 Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and
18 Representative from California in the Congress of the United
19 States.