

Introduced by Senator Corbett

May 13, 2014

Senate Resolution No. 42—Relative to Norway’s Constitution Day.

1 WHEREAS, Norway’s Constitution Day, which is celebrated
2 on May 17, commemorates the date when the nation’s constitution
3 was signed at Eidsvoll on May 17, 1814. In Norwegian, this day
4 is usually referred to as syttende mai (May 17) or Nasjonaldagen
5 (The National Day); and
6 WHEREAS, The Norwegian Parliament, known as Storting,
7 held the first May 17 celebrations in 1836. From that point
8 onwards, it was regarded as the national day. The first children’s
9 parade was held in 1870. Interestingly, World War II ended in
10 Norway only nine days before Constitution Day — on May 8,
11 1945. This was the time when the occupying German forces
12 surrendered in Norway; and
13 WHEREAS, Constitution Day celebrations follow a traditional
14 pattern of parades involving schools, high school graduates, bands,
15 and other members and organizations within the local community.
16 Many people, especially children, dress in their finest clothes on
17 this day. Some choose to wear a bunad, which is a traditional
18 Norwegian costume. There are many games, activities, and social
19 gatherings on this day; and
20 WHEREAS, From 1906 onwards, the Norwegian royal family
21 has gathered on the balcony of the Royal Palace in Oslo, which is
22 Norway’s capital city, to wave to the marching children on
23 Constitution Day each year; and
24 WHEREAS, Many Norwegians and people with Norwegian
25 ancestry also celebrate the day in different countries around the
26 world. Celebrations, dinners, and festivals are held in various

1 places across the United States. These are supported by
2 organizations, such as Sons of Norway; and

3 WHEREAS, In some Australian cities in previous years, people
4 of Norwegian heritage participated in a special street parade to
5 celebrate Constitution Day on May 17. The Orkney Norway
6 Friendship Association celebrates Norway's Constitution Day in
7 Orkney, Scotland, to recognize the islands' strong historic links
8 with Norway; and

9 WHEREAS, Norway's Constitution Day is a public holiday in
10 Norway. Schools, public offices, and businesses are closed. Road
11 users need to take into account that some streets, particularly in
12 the town centres, will be closed and there may be traffic because
13 of the parades that take place on that day, which attract crowds;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, The bunad, a traditional Norwegian dress, can be
16 worn during Constitution Day. It varies in appearance from region
17 to region, and may feature flower motifs, stripes, and pleats.
18 Embroidery can be used on many different parts of the costume,
19 including bonnets, belts, aprons, skirts, shirts, and bodices; and

20 WHEREAS, An abundance of flags are also seen on this day.
21 The Norwegian flag is red with an indigo blue Scandinavian cross
22 outlined in white that extends to the edges of the flag. The vertical
23 part of the cross is shifted to the hoist side in the style of the
24 Dannebrog, the flag of Denmark; now, therefore, be it

25 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California,* That the Senate
26 hereby honors Norway's 200th Constitution Day; and be it further

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