

**Introduced by Senator Corbett**  
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Mullin)

February 4, 2014

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 80—Relative to Irish American Heritage Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 80, as introduced, Corbett. Irish American Heritage Month.

This measure would designate March 2014 as Irish American Heritage Month in honor of the multitude of contributions that Irish Americans have made to the country and state.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1     WHEREAS, Millions of Irish people, faced with severe hardship  
2     due to famine and poverty in their nation, immigrated to the United  
3     States over the last several centuries in search of a more promising  
4     future for themselves and their families; and  
5     WHEREAS, The journey to America from the Emerald Isle was  
6     not paved with gold. The Irish spirit of determination, perseverance,  
7     and grit prevailed against dangerous seas and deadly conditions  
8     with their hearts set on the horizon; and  
9     WHEREAS, Irish Americans initially suffered prejudice and  
10    discrimination upon first arriving in the United States. As the years  
11    went on, Irish Americans became deeply integrated in their  
12    communities and made numerous contributions in all aspects of  
13    American society and culture; and  
14    WHEREAS, Irish Americans played vital roles in the  
15    development of the United States. Nine Irish Americans were  
16    signers of the Declaration of Independence, and 22 Presidents of

1 the United States have been of Irish heritage, including John F.  
2 Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama; and

3 WHEREAS, Many people of Irish descent have contributed to  
4 great movements that have helped to shape our country and its  
5 role in the world, including Mother Jones, labor activist; Lucy  
6 Burns, activist in the Women’s Movement; and Senator George  
7 Mitchell, negotiator of the Irish Peace Accord; and

8 WHEREAS, Irish Americans have also played a major role in  
9 California politics as governors, legislative leaders, city mayors,  
10 and other public officials, who have worked tirelessly to build  
11 California to the state that it is today; and

12 WHEREAS, Irish Americans were significantly involved in the  
13 development of infrastructure throughout the United States,  
14 especially in California. This included work on railroads and  
15 bridges that connected the west to the east. The Irish were also  
16 instrumental in the building of dams, roads, canals, and buildings  
17 that expanded greatly in the late 1800s; and

18 WHEREAS, Many Irish Americans have made their mark as  
19 peace officers and firefighters, and have risked or lost their lives  
20 on countless occasions in carrying out their duties; and

21 WHEREAS, Many outstanding soldiers, never to be forgotten,  
22 who fought for American freedom in the Revolutionary War were  
23 of Irish descent. Irish Americans have proudly served with  
24 distinction in every war that this nation has fought and continue  
25 to do so today; and

26 WHEREAS, Many Irish Americans have contributed greatly to  
27 the United States economy in business, including: Alexander  
28 Stewart, the inventor of the American department store; Cathleen  
29 Black, president of Hearst Publishing; Jack Welch, former president  
30 and chief executive officer of General Electric; and Herb Kelleher,  
31 cofounder of Southwest Airlines; Paul Adams of Facebook; John  
32 Donahoe, chief executive officer of eBay, Inc.; Conrad Burke,  
33 founder of Innovalight; and Maggie Sullivan Wilderotter, chief  
34 executive officer of Frontier Communications; and

35 WHEREAS, Irish Americans have contributed to the field of  
36 science, including astronaut Michael Collins, first female  
37 commander of a space shuttle, Eileen Collins, physicist and Nobel  
38 Laureate Charles Townes, and bioengineer and MacArthur “Genius  
39 grant” recipient James Collins; and

1 WHEREAS, Irish Americans have contributed to the American  
2 literary tradition through great authors, including Flannery  
3 O'Connor, Eugene O'Neill, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Mary McCarthy,  
4 Tom Clancy, and Frank McCourt; and

5 WHEREAS, Irish Americans have contributed to American  
6 entertainment with such stars as actors Jack Nicholson, John  
7 Wayne, and George Clooney; actor and comedian Bill Murray;  
8 actress Grace Kelly; actress and comedian Rosie O'Donnell; actor  
9 and singer Bing Crosby; actress and singer Rosemary Clooney;  
10 actress and singer Judy Garland; comedian Conan O'Brien; and  
11 actor and director Edward Burns, all being of Irish heritage; and

12 WHEREAS, Today, over 34 million Americans claim Irish  
13 heritage, and they continue to contribute to the American and  
14 California politics, economy, and culture; now, therefore, be it

15 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*  
16 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature, in honor of the multitude  
17 of contributions that Irish Americans have made to make this a  
18 better country and state for all people, designates March 2014 to  
19 be Irish American Heritage Month in California, and calls upon  
20 the people of the state to observe the month of March with  
21 appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities, especially on  
22 March 17, since everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day; and be it  
23 further

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

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