

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY AUGUST 7, 2014

Senate Concurrent Resolution

No. 91

Introduced by Senator Fuller

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Achadjian, Alejo, Allen, Ammiano, Atkins, Bigelow, Bloom, Bocanegra, Bonilla, Bonta, Bradford, Brown, Buchanan, Ian Calderon, Campos, Chau, Chávez, Chesbro, Conway, Cooley, Dababneh, Dahle, Daly, Dickinson, Donnelly, Eggman, Fong, Frazier, Beth Gaines, Garcia, Gatto, Gomez, Gonzalez, Gordon, Gorell, Gray, Grove, Hagman, Hall, Harkey, Holden, Jones, Jones-Sawyer, Levine, Linder, Logue, Lowenthal, Maienschein, Mansoor, Medina, Melendez, Mullin, Muratsuchi, Nazarian, Nestande, Olsen, Pan, Patterson, Perea, John A. Pérez, V. Manuel Pérez, Quirk, Quirk-Silva, Rendon, Ridley-Thomas, Rodriguez, Salas, Skinner, Stone, Ting, Wagner, Waldron, Weber, Wieckowski, Wilk, Williams, and Yamada)

February 26, 2014

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 91—Relative to Valley Fever Awareness Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 91, as amended, Fuller. Valley Fever Awareness Month.

This measure would declare August 2014 as Valley Fever Awareness Month.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Valley Fever (coccidioidomycosis), a progressive,
- 2 multisymptom, respiratory disorder, is a debilitating disease; and

1 WHEREAS, Valley Fever is caused by the inhalation of tiny
2 airborne fungi that live in the soil but are released into the air by
3 soil disturbance or wind; and

4 WHEREAS, Valley Fever attacks the respiratory system, causing
5 infections that can lead to symptoms that resemble a cold,
6 influenza, or pneumonia; and

7 WHEREAS, If left untreated or mistreated, infection can spread
8 from the lungs into the bloodstream, causing inflammation to the
9 skin, permanent damage to lung and bone tissue, and swelling of
10 the membrane surrounding the brain, leading to meningitis, which
11 can be devastating and even fatal; and

12 WHEREAS, Once serious symptoms of Valley Fever appear,
13 including pneumonia and labored breathing, prompt treatment with
14 often toxic antifungal drugs must be given, which is especially
15 disagreeable for patients who require the drugs to be injected
16 beneath the base of their skulls for meningitis and which can cause
17 side effects such as nausea, fever, and kidney damage; and

18 WHEREAS, Within California alone, Valley Fever is found in
19 portions of the Sacramento Valley, all of the San Joaquin Valley,
20 desert regions, and portions of southern California; and

21 WHEREAS, California does not have an official statewide
22 method of tracking the rate of Valley Fever infections; and

23 WHEREAS, In the last 10 years, infection rates in California
24 and Arizona have risen 400 percent, from an estimated 31 cases
25 for every 100,000 people in 1999 to 157 cases for every 100,000
26 people in 2011; and

27 WHEREAS, In Kern County, the rate of infection of Valley
28 Fever more than tripled from 2009, for a total of 2,051 cases in
29 2010 and 2,734 cases in 2011; and

30 WHEREAS, San Joaquin County Public Health Services
31 recorded 27 cases of Valley Fever in 2009, 46 cases in 2010, and
32 123 cases in 2011; and

33 WHEREAS, Valley Fever infection rates rose twelvefold
34 nationwide from 1995 to 2009, according to the federal Centers
35 for Disease Control and Prevention, and researchers estimate that
36 the fungus infects more than 150,000 people each year who either
37 suffer serious ailments without knowing the cause of their illness
38 or escape detection of the disease; and

1 WHEREAS, Misdiagnosis of Valley Fever is so pervasive that
2 experts say that some people suffer and even die from Valley Fever
3 without knowing they ever had the disease; and

4 WHEREAS, The Governor declared a Drought State of
5 Emergency on January 17, 2014, and California is experiencing
6 record dry conditions, with 2014 projected to become the driest
7 year on record; and

8 WHEREAS, Dry conditions and lack of precipitation present
9 urgent problems regarding Valley Fever; and

10 WHEREAS, Valley Fever is usually found in soil two to eight
11 inches from the surface and the extreme dry conditions caused by
12 drought increase the chances of coccidioidomycosis airborne fungi
13 exposure; and

14 WHEREAS, Central Valley prison inmates are being infected
15 by Valley Fever at epidemic rates, contributing significantly to the
16 state's prison health care costs; and

17 WHEREAS, The rapid spread of Valley Fever at state prisons
18 in the Central Valley has resulted in multiple prison inmate deaths
19 and prompted calls to close certain affected prisons, further
20 exacerbating efforts to comply with federal orders to reduce prison
21 overcrowding; and

22 WHEREAS, Valley Fever kills between 100 to 200 more
23 Americans every year than tuberculosis; and

24 WHEREAS, Valley Fever most seriously affects the young, the
25 elderly, those with lowered immune systems, and those of African
26 American and Filipino descent; and

27 WHEREAS, Valley Fever is a disease that has been studied for
28 the past 100 years but still remains impossible to control and
29 difficult to treat; and

30 WHEREAS, There is no known cure for Valley Fever, but
31 researchers are closer than ever to finding a much-needed vaccine
32 against this devastating disease; and

33 WHEREAS, The research effort to find a vaccine for Valley
34 Fever and a funding partnership including the State of California
35 were approved by the Legislature and signed by Governor Wilson
36 in 1997; now, therefore, be it

37 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
38 *thereof concurring,* That the Legislature does hereby proclaim
39 August 2014 as Valley Fever Awareness Month; and be it further

- 1 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
- 2 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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