

AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 11, 2014

Senate Concurrent Resolution

No. 128

Introduced by Senator Liu

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Stone)

(Coauthors: Senators Beall and Block, Galgiani, Leno, and Mitchell)

June 9, 2014

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 128—Relative to California Runaway and Homeless Youth Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 128, as amended, Liu. California Runaway and Homeless Youth Month.

This measure would designate the month of November 2014 as California Runaway and Homeless Youth Month and would recognize the need for individuals, schools, communities, businesses, local governments, and the state to take action on behalf of runaway and homeless youth in California.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Runaway and homeless youth are young people
- 2 between 12 and 24 years of age who have the least access to
- 3 essential opportunities and supports; and
- 4 WHEREAS, The prevalence of runaways and homelessness
- 5 among youth is staggering, with studies suggesting that nationally
- 6 between 1.6 and 1.8 million youth up to 24 years of age experience
- 7 homelessness every year, of which a disproportionate number are
- 8 gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender; and
- 9 WHEREAS, Based on national surveys and California's youth
- 10 population, an estimated 200,000 youth under 18 years of age, and

1 thousands more who are 18 to 24 years of age, are homeless for
2 one or more days each year; and

3 WHEREAS, The State Department of Education has indicated
4 in a recent report required by the federal McKinney-Vento
5 Homeless Assistance Act that during the 2012–13 school year, a
6 total of 259,656 youth, including unaccompanied youth and youth
7 with their families who lack stable housing, in kindergarten and
8 grades 1 to 12, inclusive, experienced homelessness at least one
9 day out of the year, which is an increase of 18 percent over the
10 previous academic year; and

11 WHEREAS, An overwhelming majority of runaway and
12 homeless youth have been expelled from their homes by their
13 families; physically, sexually, and emotionally abused at home;
14 discharged from foster care and other state custodial systems
15 without adequate transition plans; *or* separated from their parents
16 by death or ~~divorce~~; *divorce*. *These youth are often* too poor to
17 secure their own basic ~~needs~~; *needs* and *are* ineligible *for* or unable
18 to access adequate medical or mental health resources; and

19 WHEREAS, Runaway and homeless youth who live on the
20 street are victims of physical abuse, sexual exploitation, and crime
21 in untold numbers; and

22 WHEREAS, These youths are on the street because they feel
23 there are no other options open to them; and

24 WHEREAS, Youths who “age out” of the foster care system
25 are at an increased risk of homelessness, and represent an estimated
26 20 percent of the 20,000 youth who leave foster care and are
27 currently homeless; and

28 WHEREAS, Providing safe, stable, and permanent housing for
29 runaway and homeless youth is a family, community, state, and
30 national priority; and

31 WHEREAS, The future well-being of our state depends on the
32 value we place on our youth, and, in particular, on our actions to
33 provide the most vulnerable young people in the state with
34 opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities they
35 need to find and maintain stable housing and develop into healthy
36 and productive adults; and

37 WHEREAS, The number of effective programs providing
38 services and support to runaway and homeless youth in California
39 is a fraction of what is needed to fully address the needs of these

1 young people, as only 20 of California's 58 counties have programs
2 for runaway and homeless youth; and

3 WHEREAS, The California Coalition for Youth has operated
4 the California Youth Crisis Line (1-800-843-5200), 24 hours a
5 day, seven days a week, for over 25 years as the state's only
6 emergency response system for youth in crisis; and

7 WHEREAS, November is National Runaway and Homeless
8 Youth Awareness Month; and

9 WHEREAS, The California Coalition for Youth, along with
10 other community-based organizations, providers, and advocates,
11 is sponsoring the fourth annual California Runaway and Homeless
12 Youth Month to increase awareness and action on behalf of youth
13 who are at risk or currently living on the street; and

14 WHEREAS, Awareness of the tragedy of youth homelessness
15 and its causes must be heightened to ensure greater support for
16 effective programs aimed at preventing homelessness and helping
17 youth remain off the streets; now, therefore, be it

18 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
19 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature recognizes the need for
20 individuals, schools, communities, businesses, local governments,
21 and the state to take action on behalf of runaway and homeless
22 youth in California; and be it further

23 *Resolved*, That the Legislature hereby designates the month of
24 November 2014 as California Runaway and Homeless Youth
25 Month; and be it further

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