Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 2

Adopted in Assembly April 20, 2015

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Chief Clerk of the Assembly

Adopted in Senate April 16, 2015

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Secretary of the Senate

This resolution was received by the Secretary of State this _____ day of _____, 2015, at _____ o'clock ____M.

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Deputy Secretary of State

RESOLUTION CHAPTER _____

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 2—Relative to the Persian New Year.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 2, Nazarian. Persian New Year.

This measure would recognize the Persian New Year celebration.

WHEREAS, Nowrūz, meaning the "New Day," is the name of the New Year in the Persian calendar; and

WHEREAS, Nowrūz marks the first day of spring and the beginning of the year in the Persian calendar. It is celebrated on the day of the astronomical Northward equinox, which usually occurs on March 20 or the following day depending on where it is observed; and

WHEREAS, In Persian mythology, King Jamshid is credited with the founding of Nowrūz, while others suggest that it was founded by Zoroaster himself, although there is no clear date of its origin. Celebrating the Vernal equinox may also have been an old Babylonian tradition known before 2340 B.C.; and

WHEREAS, While Nowrūz is celebrated and observed principally in Iran, it has spread to other parts of the world, including parts of Central Asia, the Caucasus, Northwestern China, the Crimea, and some groups in the Balkans. In Iran, Nowrūz is an official holiday lasting for 13 days during which most national functions, including schools, are off and festivities take place. Also the Canadian Parliament, by unanimous consent, passed a bill on March 30, 2009, to add Nowrūz to the national calendar of Canada; and

WHEREAS, The most important activity in the celebration of Nowrūz is setting the "haft-seen table" which literally means a table of seven items that start with the letter "s." The table often includes items such as sumac (crushed spice of berries), senjed (sweet dry fruit of a lotus tree), serkeh (vinegar), and seeb (apples); and

WHEREAS, Nowrūz invites us to contemplate nature's power of renewal and rejuvenation, to look more deeply, not just into the green world outside, but at our human nature as well; and

WHEREAS, For the people celebrating Nowrūz, it is a time to appreciate their rich heritage and to move forward with hope for a prosperous new year ahead filled with health, wealth, love, joy, and success; and

WHEREAS, According to figures from the 2000 United States Census, over one-half of all Iranian immigrants in the United States lived in the State of California. In 2000, that figure was 55.9 percent or 158,613 residents. The states with the next largest Iranian immigrant populations were New York, with 17,323 residents or 6.1 percent of the population, Texas, with 15,581 residents or 5.5 percent of the population, Virginia, with 10,889 residents or 3.8 percent of the population, and Maryland, with 9,733 residents or 3.4 percent of the population; and

WHEREAS, According to the 2000 United States Census, the largest community of Iranian descent in the United States resides in California, concentrated in the Los Angeles and Beverly Hills area. The number of people of Iranian descent in this area is greater than the Iranian populations in the next 20 states combined; and

WHEREAS, The Iranian population in California has grown to over 200,000 residents according to the 2010 United States Census. However, Iranian organizations and the Iranian Community believes the correct number may be four times that amount; and

WHEREAS, The Small Business Administration conducted a study in 2008 that found that Iranian immigrants were among the top 20 immigrant groups with the highest rate of business ownership, contributing substantially to the national economy; and

WHEREAS, Iranian Americans have founded and served in senior leadership positions of many major American companies; and

WHEREAS, The Los Angeles City Council designated the intersection of Westwood Boulevard and Wilkins Avenue in West Los Angeles as "Persian Square." The first Persian business in the city opened in 1974 on the corner of Westwood Boulevard and Wilkins Avenue. Since then there has been an increase of Persian businesses and residents in the area. Many of the businesses on Westwood Boulevard, between Wilshire Boulevard and Ohio

Avenue, are owned and operated by people of Persian cultural identity; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature joins the Persian and other communities throughout the state in celebrating March 21, 2015, as the beginning of the Persian New Year and extends best wishes for a peaceful and prosperous Nowrūz to all Californians; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

Attest:

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Secretary of State