

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 41

Introduced by Assembly Member Ting

March 3, 2015

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 41—Relative to Sunshine Week.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 41, as introduced, Ting. Sunshine Week.

This measure would designate March 15, 2015, through March 21, 2015, as Sunshine Week.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, California has a long tradition in support of open
2 government and access to government records; and
3 WHEREAS, In 1953, California enacted the Ralph M. Brown
4 Act guaranteeing the public’s right to attend and participate in
5 local governing bodies; and
6 WHEREAS, In 1967, the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act was
7 adopted to mandate open meetings of state agencies, boards, and
8 commissions; and
9 WHEREAS, In 1968, California enacted the California Public
10 Records Act that expressly declared that “access to information
11 concerning the conduct of the people’s business is a fundamental
12 and necessary right of every person in this state”; and
13 WHEREAS, California voters approved Proposition 59, a state
14 constitutional amendment, also known as the “Sunshine
15 Amendment,” in 2004 that furthers open government protections
16 and the rights of voters; and

1 WHEREAS, California voters approved Proposition 42, a state
2 constitutional amendment, in 2014 to affirm the people’s mandate
3 for open government; and

4 WHEREAS, California entrepreneurs created the information
5 technology revolution and are creating opportunities for
6 government to use technology to improve performance,
7 transparency, and trust; and

8 WHEREAS, Open government reforms continue to spread across
9 the country, including the adoption of open data policies to urge
10 innovation and economic development through the use of
11 high-value government data that can be freely accessed, modified,
12 and shared; and

13 WHEREAS, President Barack Obama issued an Open
14 Government Directive to all federal departments and agencies that
15 required the federal government to take steps towards a more open
16 government including publishing government information online
17 with the presumption of openness, to improve the quality of
18 government information, and to institutionalize a culture of open
19 government within departments and agencies; and

20 WHEREAS, The state of California was one of the first states
21 to launch an open data repository (data.ca.gov), designed to provide
22 a single source of raw data in the state; and

23 WHEREAS, State agencies, including the California Health and
24 Human Services Agency and the State Controller’s office, have
25 shown leadership in creating portals that showcase government
26 data in an interactive and searchable format that enhances its value
27 and utility; and

28 WHEREAS, Many local governments have been leaders in open
29 records and public meetings and the Cities of San Francisco,
30 Sacramento, San Diego, Oakland, West Sacramento, and Los
31 Angeles and the Counties of Los Angeles and San Mateo have
32 adopted Open Data policies; and

33 WHEREAS, Numerous California cities have named Chief Data
34 Officers, and local government agencies have launched Open Data
35 portals; and

36 WHEREAS, With an inaugural grant from the Knight
37 Foundation, the American Society of News Editors launched
38 Sunshine Week in March 2005, and it continues to be celebrated
39 each year in mid-March to coincide with National Freedom of

1 Information Day and President James Madison’s birthday on March
2 16; and

3 WHEREAS, Sunshine Week is now a national initiative to
4 promote a dialogue about the importance of open government and
5 freedom of information. Participants include news media, civic
6 groups, libraries, nonprofit entities, schools, and others interested
7 in the public’s right to know; and

8 WHEREAS, The coverage, commentaries, and activities
9 promoting open government during Sunshine Week have led to
10 tangible, meaningful changes to people’s lives, and the laws that
11 govern them; and

12 WHEREAS, Sunshine Week is increasing public awareness and
13 people are playing more of a role in the actions that affect their
14 communities. People are learning what kinds of information they
15 have a right to see, how and where to obtain that information, and
16 what to do if someone tries to prevent them from accessing it; now,
17 therefore, be it

18 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
19 *thereof concurring*, That Sunshine Week is a celebration of the
20 public’s commitment to openness and an exploration of what open
21 government means in a technology-enhanced future; and be it
22 further

23 *Resolved*, That the Legislature hereby designates March 15,
24 2015, through March 21, 2015, as Sunshine Week and encourages
25 all Californians to participate in appropriate activities relating to
26 open government and access to public information; and be it further

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