

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 12, 2015

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

House Resolution

No. 10

Introduced by Assembly Member Jones-Sawyer

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Achadjian, Alejo, Travis Allen, Atkins, Baker, Bigelow, Bigelow, Bloom, Bonilla, Bonta, Brough, Brown, Calderon, Campos, Chang, Chau, Chávez, Chiu, Chu, Cooley, Cooper, Dababneh, Dahle, Daly, Dodd, Eggman, Frazier, Beth Gaines, Gallagher, Cristina Garcia, Eduardo Garcia, Gatto, Gipson, Gomez, Gonzalez, Gordon, Gray, Grove, Hadley, Harper, Holden, Irwin, Jones, Lackey, Levine, Linder, Lopez, Low, Maienschein, Mathis, Mayes, McCarty, Medina, Melendez, Mullin, Nazarian, Obernolte, O'Donnell, Olsen, Patterson, Perea, Quirk, Rendon, Ridley-Thomas, Rodriguez, Salas, Santiago, Steinorth, Mark Stone, Thurmond, Ting, Wagner, Waldron, Weber, Wilk, Williams, and Wood)

February 26, 2015

House Resolution No. 10—Relative to the 50th Anniversary of Bloody Sunday.

- 1 WHEREAS, March 7, 2015, will mark 50 years since the brave
2 Foot Soldiers of the Voting Rights Movement first attempted to
3 march from Selma to Montgomery on Bloody Sunday in protest
4 against the denial of their right to vote and were brutally assaulted
5 by Alabama state troopers; and
6 WHEREAS, Beginning in 1964, members of the Student
7 Nonviolent Coordinating Committee attempted to register
8 African-Americans to vote throughout the State of Alabama; and

1 WHEREAS, These efforts were designed to ensure that every
2 American citizen would be able to exercise their constitutional
3 right to vote and have their voices heard; and

4 WHEREAS, By December of 1964, many of these efforts
5 remained unsuccessful. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., working with
6 leaders from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and
7 the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, began to organize
8 protests throughout Alabama; and

9 WHEREAS, On March 7, 1965, over 500 voting rights marchers,
10 known as Foot Soldiers, gathered on the Edmund Pettus Bridge
11 in Selma, Alabama, in peaceful protest of the denial of their most
12 sacred and constitutionally protected right—the right to vote; and

13 WHEREAS, Led by John Lewis of the Student Nonviolent
14 Coordinating Committee and Rev. Hosea Williams of the Southern
15 Christian Leadership Conference, these Foot Soldiers began the
16 march towards the Alabama State Capitol in Montgomery,
17 Alabama; and

18 WHEREAS, As the Foot Soldiers crossed the Edmund Pettus
19 Bridge, they were confronted by a wall of Alabama state troopers
20 who brutally attacked and beat them; and

21 WHEREAS, Americans across the country witnessed this tragic
22 turn of events as news stations broadcast the brutality on a day
23 that would be later known as Bloody Sunday; and

24 WHEREAS, Two days later, on Tuesday, March 9, 1965, nearly
25 2,500 Foot Soldiers led by Dr. Martin Luther King risked their
26 lives once more and attempted a second peaceful march starting
27 at the Edmund Pettus Bridge. This second attempted march was
28 later known as Turnaround Tuesday; and

29 WHEREAS, Fearing for the safety of these Foot Soldiers who
30 received no protection from federal or state authorities during this
31 second march, Dr. King led the marchers to the base of the Edmund
32 Pettus Bridge and stopped. Dr. King kneeled and offered a prayer
33 of solidarity and walked back to the church; and

34 WHEREAS, Lyndon B. Johnson, inspired by the bravery and
35 determination of these Foot Soldiers and the atrocities they
36 endured, announced his plan for a voting rights bill aimed at
37 securing the precious right to vote for all citizens during an address
38 to Congress on March 15, 1965; and

39 WHEREAS, On March 17, 1965, one week after Turnaround
40 Tuesday, U.S. District Judge Frank M. Johnson ruled that the Foot

1 Soldiers had a First Amendment right to petition the government
2 through peaceful protest and ordered federal agents to provide full
3 protection to the Foot Soldiers during the Selma to Montgomery
4 Voting Rights March; and

5 WHEREAS, Judge Johnson’s decision overturned Alabama
6 Governor George Wallace’s prohibition on the protest due to public
7 safety concerns; and

8 WHEREAS, On March 21, 1965, under the court order, the U.S.
9 Army, the federalized Alabama National Guard, and countless
10 federal agents and marshals escorted nearly 8,000 Foot Soldiers
11 from the start of their heroic journey in Selma, Alabama to their
12 safe arrival on the steps of the Alabama State Capitol Building on
13 March 25, 1965; and

14 WHEREAS, The extraordinary bravery and sacrifice these Foot
15 Soldiers displayed in pursuit of a peaceful march from Selma to
16 Montgomery brought national attention to the struggle for equal
17 voting rights, and served as the catalyst for Congress to pass the
18 Voting Rights Act of 1965, which President Johnson signed into
19 law on August 6, 1965; now, therefore, be it

20 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, That to*
21 *commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Movement*
22 *and the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, it is befitting*
23 *for the California State Assembly to commemorate March 7, 2015,*
24 *in honor of the Foot Soldiers who participated in Bloody Sunday,*
25 *Turnaround Tuesday, or the final Selma to Montgomery Voting*
26 *Rights March during March of 1965, which served as a catalyst*
27 *for the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and be it further*

28 *Resolved, That the Chief Clerk provide copies of this resolution*
29 *to the author for appropriate distribution.*

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