

House Resolution

No. 48

Introduced by Assembly Member Brown

April 11, 2016

House Resolution No. 48—Relative to the 4th of July.

1 WHEREAS, July 4, 2016, marks the 240th anniversary of the
2 signing of the Declaration of Independence, and by the adoption
3 of that document — formally titled, “The unanimous Declaration
4 of the thirteen United States of America” — the nation we today
5 know as the United States of America officially came into being,
6 an occasion forever memorialized by President Abraham Lincoln
7 in the words of his Gettysburg Address as when “... our fathers
8 brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty,
9 and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal”;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, On June 7, 1776, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,
12 at a location today known as Independence Hall, Virginia delegate
13 Richard Henry Lee brought the following resolution before the
14 Second Continental Congress of the United Colonies: “Resolved,
15 That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and
16 independent states, that they are absolved from all allegiance to
17 the British Crown, and that all political connection between them
18 and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved
19”; and

20 WHEREAS, On June 8, 1776, Lee’s resolution was referred to
21 a committee of the whole of the Continental Congress, at which
22 time it spent most of that day, as well as June 10, debating
23 independence; and

1 WHEREAS, On June 11, 1776, a “Committee of Five” — with
2 Thomas Jefferson of Virginia being picked unanimously as its first
3 member, and also including John Adams of Massachusetts,
4 Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, Robert R. Livingston of New
5 York, and Roger Sherman of Connecticut — was charged with
6 drafting a declaration of independence for consideration by the
7 Continental Congress; and

8 WHEREAS, The members of the “Committee of Five” assigned
9 Jefferson the task of producing a draft declaration, and on June
10 28, 1776, he produced a draft that, with minor changes by the
11 committee members, was forwarded to the Congress for its further
12 consideration; and

13 WHEREAS, On July 2, 1776, the Second Continental Congress
14 adopted the Lee resolution upon the affirmative vote of 12 of the
15 13 colonial delegations, an occasion that delegate and future
16 President John Adams detailed to his wife, Abigail, in a letter
17 written July 3, 1776, as follows: “Yesterday the greatest Question
18 was decided, which ever was debated in America, and a greater
19 perhaps, never was or will be decided among Men”; and

20 WHEREAS, On July 4, 1776, after further debate and changes
21 to the committee document, the Continental Congress adopted the
22 Declaration of Independence establishing the United States of
23 America, to which John Hancock that day affixed his signature,
24 with 55 other delegates representing the 13 colonies — now states
25 of the newly created nation — signing the declaration within the
26 next several weeks; and

27 WHEREAS, July 4 is a day unlike any other — in the history
28 of the United States of America, and indeed, the world — in that
29 not only is it the day that an infant nation formally defied the most
30 powerful empire on Earth in a quest for freedom, liberty, and
31 independence, but even more importantly because on that day this
32 new nation declared as a “self-evident truth” — known and
33 knowable to all persons at all times in all places throughout the
34 world — the radical notion that “all men are created equal ...
35 endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that
36 among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”; and

37 WHEREAS, Since its adoption and bold pronouncement more
38 than two centuries ago, the Declaration of Independence and the
39 principles which animate that timeless document have inspired
40 literally billions of persons around the world to pursue freedom in

1 their own nations, for themselves and their own loved ones, and
2 for their fellow men and women, and remain today an imperfectly
3 unrealized goal to which all Americans and all who cherish liberty
4 must rededicate themselves, just as the drafters and signers of the
5 Declaration of Independence did by declaring: “with a firm reliance
6 on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge[d] to
7 each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor”; and

8 WHEREAS, On this and every July Fourth, it is both proper
9 and fitting that the institutions of California government, and
10 indeed all Californians, express heartfelt gratitude and indebtedness
11 to those men and women who have served in the Armed Forces
12 of the United States, and in particular to those who have suffered
13 the injuries of battle and who have made the ultimate sacrifice in
14 protecting freedom and liberty around the world, recalling the
15 words of President Abraham Lincoln that, as a result of their
16 profound sacrifice, “... this nation, under God, shall have a new
17 birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the
18 people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth”; now,
19 therefore, be it

20 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California*, That the
21 Assembly of the State of California does — and intends to every
22 year immediately preceding the 4th of July — take this opportunity
23 to recognize and celebrate July 4, 2016, and the 240th anniversary
24 of the birth of our great nation and the signing of the Declaration
25 of Independence that this day represents; and be it further

26 *Resolved*, That the Assembly of the State of California calls
27 upon all the people of the great State of California, and the United
28 States of America, to take the opportunity of the 4th of July holiday
29 to obtain a greater knowledge and understanding of the facts and
30 circumstances that compelled the 13 original colonies to declare
31 their independence, and of the timeless principles of liberty,
32 equality, and self-determination that rest at the heart of the
33 Declaration of Independence; and be it further

34 *Resolved*, That the Assembly of the State of California, on behalf
35 of a grateful citizenry, hereby expresses its heartfelt thanks,
36 appreciation, and prayers to all who have served — and who
37 currently serve — in the Armed Forces of the United States, in
38 recognition of the countless sacrifices and the indispensable role
39 these brave men and women have played even before the founding
40 of our nation on July 4, 1776, in preserving, protecting, and

- 1 defending the freedoms and liberties of all Americans, and
- 2 expanding freedom throughout the world; and be it further
- 3 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly shall make
- 4 available suitable copies of this resolution for distribution by
- 5 Members of the Assembly of the State of California.