

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 109

Introduced by Assembly Member Cooper

January 4, 2016

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 109—Relative to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 109, as introduced, Cooper. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

This measure would proclaim that Monday, January 18, 2016, be observed as the official memorial of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birth and his work in the Civil Rights Movement.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, One hundred years after the Emancipation
2 Proclamation, on August 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
3 and others organized hundreds of thousands of blacks and whites,
4 Jews and gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, in a march to the
5 Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC where Dr. King made his
6 famous “I Have a Dream” speech announcing that the days of
7 segregation in the United States were numbered; and

8 WHEREAS, Monday, January 18, 2016, marks the 30th national
9 celebration of the national holiday for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
10 and his fight for civil and human rights; and

11 WHEREAS, On Friday, January 15, 2016, Dr. Martin Luther
12 King, Jr. would have been 87 years of age; and

13 WHEREAS, On April 10, 1970, California became the first
14 state to pass legislation making Dr. King’s birthday a school
15 holiday and, subsequently, a statewide holiday; and

1 WHEREAS, Representative John Conyers (D-Michigan)
2 submitted the first legislation for a national Dr. Martin Luther
3 King, Jr. holiday, which was signed into law by President Ronald
4 Wilson Reagan, on November 2, 1983; and

5 WHEREAS, January 20, 1986, marked the first observance of
6 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; and

7 WHEREAS, Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement helped
8 change public policy from segregation to integration, resulting in
9 the repeal of the post-Reconstruction era state laws mandating
10 racial segregation in the South known as the “Jim Crow Laws,”
11 thereby leading to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the
12 Voting Rights Act of 1965, and other antidiscrimination laws aimed
13 at ending economic, legal, and social segregation in America; and

14 WHEREAS, Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement helped
15 change public policy from legal and socially acceptable
16 discrimination and segregation to an open and accessible policy
17 of racial integration leading to equal participation and access to
18 primary and higher education, housing, employment, transportation,
19 federal, state, and local governmental elections, and other aspects
20 of public policy relating to human rights; and

21 WHEREAS, These public policy changes at the national level
22 influenced many changes in California that culminated in the
23 passage of the Unruh Civil Rights Act and the Rumford Fair
24 Housing Act, in open enrollment and access to higher education
25 specifically with respect to the California State University and the
26 University of California, and in employment and labor laws,
27 transportation policy, election laws, and other aspects of public
28 policy; and

29 WHEREAS, The unfinished business of Dr. King and the Civil
30 Rights Movement was and is the plight of the poor, the fight against
31 war and for worldwide peace, and the struggle for a fair, equitable,
32 and sensible economic system; and

33 WHEREAS, Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement noted
34 that a majority of Americans lived below the poverty line, and that
35 the huge income gaps between rich and poor called for “changes
36 in the structure of our society”; and

37 WHEREAS, Dr. King, in the last months of his life, began
38 organizing a Poor People’s Campaign to, among other things,
39 assemble “a multiracial army of the poor that would descend on
40 Washington—engaging in nonviolent civil disobedience at the

1 Capitol, if need be—until Congress enacted a poor people’s bill
2 of rights”; and

3 WHEREAS, All of the aforementioned concerns and more
4 continue to be the quest of civil and human rights organizations
5 in the great State of California, across America, and throughout
6 the world; and

7 WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. fought to change public
8 policy from the “self-inflicted wound of segregation to the
9 pluralistic diverse democracy” we continue to construct today; and

10 WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights
11 Movement serve as a model for principled leadership and
12 forward-thinking, bipartisan public policy; now, therefore, be it

13 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
14 *thereof concurring*, That Monday, January 18, 2016, be observed
15 as the official memorial of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birth and
16 his work in the Civil Rights Movement; and be it further

17 *Resolved*, That this day, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the
18 Civil Rights Movement be commemorated for their help in
19 changing public policy from segregation to integration, for the
20 betterment of this, the great State of California and these United
21 States of America; and be it further

22 *Resolved*, That the Legislature encourages all Americans to pay
23 tribute to the life and works of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through
24 participation in community service projects on Dr. Martin Luther
25 King, Jr. Day; and be it further

26 *Resolved*, That the Legislature recognizes the inherent value of
27 community service and volunteerism in the creation of a civil
28 society and as a means of nonviolent community progress
29 consistent with the works of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and be
30 it further

31 *Resolved*, That the Legislature recognizes the benefits of the
32 collaborative work by many organizations that promote, facilitate,
33 and carry out needed service projects nationwide; and be it further

34 *Resolved*, That the Legislature encourages its members and
35 colleagues to urge their constituents to participate in community
36 service projects; and be it further

37 *Resolved*, That the Legislature acknowledges that, by serving
38 one’s country, one’s community, and one’s neighbor, our nation
39 makes progress in civility, equality, and unity consistent with the

- 1 values and life's work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and be it
- 2 further
- 3 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
- 4 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.