

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 28, 2016

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 2, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 111

Introduced by Assembly Member Nazarian

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

(Coauthors: Senators Allen, Anderson, Bates, Block, Hall, Hertzberg, Huff, Leno, Vidak, and Wieckowski)

January 6, 2016

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 111—Relative to the Persian New Year.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 111, as amended, Nazarian. Persian New Year.

This measure would recognize Nowrūz, the Persian New Year celebration.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Nowrūz, meaning the “New Day,” is the name of
2 the New Year in the Persian calendar; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

35 WHEREAS, According to figures from the 2000 United States
36 Census, over one-half of all Iranian immigrants in the United States
37 lived in the State of California. In 2000, that figure was 55.9
38 percent or 158,613 residents. The states with the next largest
39 Iranian immigrant populations were New York, with 17,323
40 residents or 6.1 percent of the population, Texas, with 15,581

1 residents or 5.5 percent of the population, Virginia, with 10,889
2 residents or 3.8 percent of the population, and Maryland, with
3 9,733 residents or 3.4 percent of the population; and

4 WHEREAS, According to the 2000 United States Census, the
5 largest community of Iranian descent in the United States resides
6 in California, concentrated in the Los Angeles and Beverly Hills
7 area. The number of people of Iranian descent in these areas are
8 greater than the Iranian populations in the next 20 states combined;
9 and

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

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

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

21 WHEREAS, The Los Angeles City Council designated the
22 intersection of Westwood Boulevard and Wilkins Avenue in West
23 Los Angeles as “Persian Square.” The first Persian business in the
24 city opened in 1974 on the corner of Westwood Boulevard and
25 Wilkins Avenue. Since then there has been an increase of Persian
26 businesses and residents in the area. Many of the businesses on
27 Westwood Boulevard, between Wilshire Boulevard and Ohio
28 Avenue, are owned and operated by people of Persian cultural
29 identity; now, therefore, be it

30 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
31 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature joins the Persian and other
32 communities throughout the state in celebrating March 20, 2016,
33 as the beginning of the Persian New Year and extends best wishes
34 for a peaceful and prosperous Nowrūz to all Californians; and be
35 it further

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

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