

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY FEBRUARY 12, 2016

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY FEBRUARY 9, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 127

Introduced by Assembly Member Baker

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

January 28, 2016

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 127—Relative to Abraham Lincoln’s birthday.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 127, as amended, Baker. Abraham Lincoln’s birthday.

This measure would declare that President Abraham Lincoln be honored on February 12, 2016, the anniversary of his birthday.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln the 16th President of the United
- 2 States, and one of our nation’s most respected and admired
- 3 Americans, rose from humble beginnings to become President of

1 the United States and courageously led his country during its
2 darkest time, the Civil War; and

3 WHEREAS, President Lincoln brought a profound honesty and
4 integrity to the Office of the President, and will always be
5 remembered as “Honest Abe.” Most of all, he will forever be
6 associated with saving the Union and with the abolition of slavery;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln was born on February
9 12, 1809, in Kentucky, and spent the first seven years of his life
10 there; and

11 WHEREAS, In his entire life, President Lincoln was only able
12 to attend school for a total of one year. This lack of formal
13 education only made him hungrier for more knowledge, and he
14 mastered the Bible, the works of William Shakespeare, and the
15 law; and

16 WHEREAS, In 1846, he was elected to the United States
17 Congress as the only member of the Whig Party in the Illinois
18 congressional delegation, where he forthrightly articulated his
19 views against the Mexican War and his vehement opposition to
20 the extension of slavery, choosing not to run for reelection in 1848;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, Soon after President Lincoln joined the Republican
23 Party, a new political party opposed to the extension of slavery,
24 in 1858 the Republicans nominated him for the United States
25 Senate. In his nomination acceptance speech, Lincoln stated: “A
26 house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government
27 cannot endure, permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect
28 the Union to be dissolved — I do not expect the house to fall —
29 but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one
30 thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest
31 the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall
32 rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or
33 its advocates will push it forward, till it shall become lawful in all
34 the States, old as well as new — North as well as South.” He lost
35 in a close election to Stephen Douglas, the Democratic Party
36 candidate; and

37 WHEREAS, Just two years later, having won the Republican
38 party nomination for President of the United States, President
39 Lincoln won election by a small margin, defeating, among other
40 candidates, Senator Stephen Douglas; and

1 WHEREAS, Shortly after assuming office, the Civil War began.
2 As the war continued, President Lincoln expanded the objectives
3 of the war beyond saving and restoring the Union, but also to
4 freeing the slaves and abolishing the institution of slavery; and

5 WHEREAS, On September 22, 1862, President Lincoln took
6 the first major step toward the total abolition of slavery in the
7 United States by issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, which
8 took effect on January 1, 1863; and

9 WHEREAS, President Lincoln enunciated the nation's loftiest
10 ideals during its darkest moment following the bloodiest battle of
11 the Civil War. His Gettysburg Address, regarded as one of the
12 finest speeches in the English language, was delivered by him at
13 Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on November 19, 1863, while dedicating
14 a cemetery for those killed in the Battle of Gettysburg, which took
15 place from July 1 to July 3, 1863, between the Army of the
16 Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia; and

17 WHEREAS, In his Gettysburg Address, President Lincoln
18 reaffirmed the nation's foremost founding principles, declaring
19 the United States to be a nation "conceived in Liberty, and
20 dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," while
21 assuring a nation still consumed by war "that this nation, under
22 God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of
23 the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the
24 earth"; and

25 WHEREAS, To ensure that the provisions of the Emancipation
26 Proclamation could not be construed as a mere wartime measure,
27 President Lincoln insisted that enactment of a constitutional
28 amendment abolishing slavery be included in the 1864 Republican
29 Party platform; and

30 WHEREAS, Upon reelection to a second term as President in
31 1864, President Lincoln actively supported the passage in Congress
32 of what became the 13th Amendment to the United States
33 Constitution, with the copy of the joint resolution referring the
34 13th Amendment to the states for ratification, which to this day is
35 housed in the National Archives, actually bearing President
36 Lincoln's signature, even though the President has no formal
37 constitutional role in the amendment process, and joint resolutions
38 do not go to the White House for either signature or approval; and

39 WHEREAS, President Lincoln ultimately reunified the nation
40 and brought about a successful conclusion to our nation's bloodiest

1 war, as the Civil War ended on April 9, 1865, with the surrender
2 of General Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia to
3 the Union General, Ulysses S. Grant, at Appomattox Court House;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, Only five days later, on April 14, 1865, President
6 Lincoln was shot while viewing a performance of “Our American
7 Cousin” at Ford’s Theater in Washington, D.C., and died the next
8 day, not living to see his dreams of the formal abolition of slavery
9 and the restoration of the Union realized; and

10 WHEREAS, President Lincoln’s accomplishments and legacy
11 as the “Great Emancipator” and “Preserver of Our Union” are
12 perhaps unsurpassed in the history of our nation, and it is
13 particularly appropriate to recognize President Lincoln, a portrait
14 of whom hangs in a place of honor in the Assembly Chamber;
15 now, therefore, be it

16 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
17 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature hereby declares that
18 President Abraham Lincoln be honored on February 12, 2016, the
19 anniversary of his birthday, not only in recognition of his numerous
20 accomplishments and contributions to our nation, but also as the
21 virtual symbol of the American dream, whereby an ordinary person
22 from the most humble beginnings can reach the pinnacle of
23 American society to be elected President, and to serve his country
24 with honor and courage; and be it further

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