
**Introduced by Senators Block, Allen, Hertzberg, Jackson, Leno,
Stone, and Wolk**

(Principal coauthors: Assembly Members Bloom, Levine, Linder,
Medina, Nazarian, and Thurmond)

April 9, 2015

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 39—Relative to Jewish American
Heritage Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 39, as introduced, Block. Jewish American Heritage Month.

This measure would state that the Legislature recognizes May 2015 as Jewish American Heritage Month, encourages all Californians to participate in appropriate observances with activities that celebrate and commemorate Jewish American Heritage Month, and commends Jewish Americans for their notable accomplishments and outstanding service to the state and the nation.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, For thousands of years, the Jewish people have
2 sustained their identity and traditions while persevering in the face
3 of persecution, enslavement, years of wandering, forced
4 segregation, and the horrors of the Holocaust; and
5 WHEREAS, Ever since the first Dutch Jew set foot in New
6 Amsterdam in 1654, Jews have been contributing bountifully to
7 the culture and history of the United States of America, have
8 achieved great success, strengthened the country, and helped shape
9 the American way of life through their deep commitment to faith,
10 family, and community; and

1 WHEREAS, When the first Jewish settlers came to this country,
2 they sought a place of promise where they could practice their
3 faith in freedom and live in liberty; and

4 WHEREAS, In his second year in office, President George
5 Washington wrote a letter to the Touro Synagogue in Newport,
6 Rhode Island, which was one of first Jewish houses of worship in
7 the United States of America, reaffirming the nation's commitment
8 to religious freedom where he noted that the government of the
9 United States would give "to bigotry no sanction [and] to
10 persecution no assistance," and that all Americans are entitled to
11 "liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship;" and

12 WHEREAS, It was such a belief that drew generations of Jewish
13 immigrants to the United States of America to rebuild their lives,
14 whether it was Jewish families fleeing pogroms or persecution in
15 Europe during the last century, Holocaust survivors, or Jews
16 trapped behind the Iron Curtain; and

17 WHEREAS, This history led many Jewish Americans to find
18 common cause with the Civil Rights Movement, as African
19 Americans and Jewish Americans marched side by side in Selma
20 and Montgomery, boarded buses for Freedom Rides together, and
21 united in their support of liberty and human dignity; and

22 WHEREAS, Jewish Americans have continued their strong
23 support for ending discrimination in voting, employment, public
24 accommodation, and in society at large, by prominently
25 participating in virtually every civil rights effort in the American
26 experience, including those for women, farmworkers, the disabled,
27 and for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans; and

28 WHEREAS, As a nation of immigrants, the United States is
29 better and stronger because Jewish people from all over the world
30 have chosen to become American citizens; and

31 WHEREAS, Jewish American Heritage Month is the time when
32 the rich history of Jewish Americans is celebrated and their
33 contributions to this nation are honored; and

34 WHEREAS, Anyone interested in learning more about the
35 heritage and contributions of Jewish Americans should visit
36 www.JewishHeritageMonth.gov; and

37 WHEREAS, Jewish American Heritage Month is also an
38 opportunity to remember and thank the many Jewish Americans
39 who defend this nation's ideals as members of the United States
40 Armed Forces; and

1 WHEREAS, Jewish American Heritage Month is also a time to
2 renew this nation's unbreakable bond with the nation of Israel.
3 This bond is a partnership built on mutual interests and shared
4 ideals that transcend politics. Israel and the United States of
5 America are enriched by diversity and faith, fueled by innovation,
6 and ruled not only by men and women, but also by laws; and

7 WHEREAS, Jewish Americans continue to guide the nation's
8 progress as scientists, teachers, entrepreneurs, public servants,
9 private citizens, leaders, and parents; and

10 WHEREAS, Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz
11 sponsored House Concurrent Resolution 315 (H. Con. Res. 315
12 (109th)) that urges the President of the United States to issue each
13 year a proclamation calling on state and local governments and
14 the people of the United States to observe American Jewish History
15 Month, now, therefore, be it

16 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
17 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature recognizes May 2015 as
18 Jewish American Heritage Month, encourages all Californians to
19 participate in appropriate observances with activities that celebrate
20 and commemorate Jewish American Heritage Month, and
21 commends Jewish Americans for their notable accomplishments
22 and outstanding service to the state and the nation; and be it further

23 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
24 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.