

**Introduced by Senator Hancock**

April 13, 2015

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 41—Relative to California’s Chess Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 41, as introduced, Hancock. California’s Chess Month.

This measure designates October as California’s Chess Month, encourages the people of California to observe Chess Month with appropriate programs and activities, and encourages schools to include chess as an educational tool in their classrooms.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1     WHEREAS, Designating October as California’s Chess Month  
2 would enhance awareness and encourage students and adults to  
3 engage in a game known to enhance critical thinking,  
4 determination, self-esteem, problem solving skills, and serves as  
5 a gateway to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics  
6 education; and  
7     WHEREAS, There are 9,294 members of the United States  
8 Chess Federation in the State of California, and unknown numbers  
9 of additional people in California who play the game without  
10 joining an official organization; and  
11     WHEREAS, More than one-half of California’s members are  
12 scholastic members, and many of the scholastic members join by  
13 the age of eight; and  
14     WHEREAS, There are more than 80,000 members of the United  
15 States Chess Federation, and more than 2,000 affiliated chess clubs  
16 and organizations today; and

1 WHEREAS, In 1992, New Jersey Governor Jim Florio signed  
2 into law a bill to establish chess instruction in public schools and  
3 cited, “In countries where chess is offered widely in schools  
4 students exhibit excellence in the ability to recognize complex  
5 patterns and consequently excel in math and science”; and

6 WHEREAS, Former United States Secretary of Education Terrel  
7 Bell encouraged knowledge of chess as a way to develop a  
8 preschooler’s intellect and academic readiness; and

9 WHEREAS, In Western Pennsylvania, more than 70 schools  
10 and a dozen libraries offer chess programs, reaching several  
11 thousand students each year; and

12 WHEREAS, In 2000, a report found that students who received  
13 chess instruction scored significantly higher on all measures of  
14 academic achievement, including math, spatial analysis, and  
15 nonverbal reasoning ability; and

16 WHEREAS, America’s Foundation for Chess has been working  
17 with 2nd and 3rd grade students and their teachers to promote the  
18 use of chess as an educational tool through their First Move  
19 curriculum to increase higher level thinking skills, advance math  
20 and reading skills, and build self-confidence; and

21 WHEREAS, Independent studies conducted by the Kensington  
22 Research Group in partnership with the Berkeley Chess School  
23 for the 2011–12 school year in two of Oakland’s Title I schools  
24 have linked chess programs to the improvement of student scores  
25 in the San Francisco Bay Area in reading and math; and

26 WHEREAS, A 2013 independent study conducted by the  
27 Department of Psychology and Cognitive Development of the  
28 Graduate School of Education at the University of California,  
29 Berkeley, highlighting chess skill acquisition and development,  
30 showed dramatic increase in students’ fluid reasoning, as well as  
31 enhancing students’ ability to better handle stressful situations,  
32 which positively influence decisionmaking; and

33 WHEREAS, Chess is a powerful cognitive learning tool that  
34 can be used to successfully enhance reading and math concepts;  
35 and

36 WHEREAS, Chess engages students of all learning styles and  
37 strengths and promotes problem solving and higher level thinking  
38 skills; now, therefore, be it

39 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*  
40 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature hereby designates October

1 as California’s Chess Month, encourages the people of California  
2 to observe Chess Month with appropriate programs and activities,  
3 and encourages schools to include chess as an educational tool in  
4 their classrooms.

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7 **CORRECTIONS:**

8 **Text—Page 2.**

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