

Introduced by Senator Berryhill

**(Coauthors: Senators Anderson, Gaines, Huff, Jackson, Morrell,
and Pavley)**

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Travis Allen, Bigelow, Dahle, Lopez,
and Olsen)

April 29, 2015

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 49—Relative to Wildfire
Awareness Week.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 49, as introduced, Berryhill. Wildfire Awareness Week.

This measure would declare the week of May 3, 2015, to May 9,
2015, inclusive, as Wildfire Awareness Week to raise public awareness
and encourage all residents of California to be prepared for wildfires.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Wildfires significantly impact California’s
- 2 environmental, economic, and social well-being; and
- 3 WHEREAS, California is a dynamic place to live, work, and
- 4 recreate, with a diverse ecological environment; and
- 5 WHEREAS, The current drought and significantly increased
- 6 drought-induced mortality of trees and other natural vegetation
- 7 throughout the state create ideal conditions for severe wildfire risk;
- 8 and
- 9 WHEREAS, Approximately 95 percent of wildfires in California
- 10 are human-caused and, therefore, are preventable; and
- 11 WHEREAS, The history of California wildfires has seen
- 12 unparalleled devastation, with wildfires comparable to the world’s
- 13 most destructive fires in the past 150 years, and Californians should

1 not forget the lessons learned and impact from previous wildfires,
2 including, the 1977 Spanish Ranch fire near Santa Maria, the 1970
3 Laguna fire near San Diego, the 2003 Cedar fire east of San Diego,
4 the 2007 Southern California fires, and the 2013 Rim Fire in the
5 Stanislaus National Forest that became the third largest wildfire
6 in California’s history; and

7 WHEREAS, Wildfire suppression costs only represent a small
8 portion of the overall economic impacts and do not reflect the total
9 cost of large and damaging fires; and

10 WHEREAS, Residents must be encouraged to move from the
11 expectation of being protected from a wildfire to the understanding
12 that they must be prepared to survive a wildfire; and

13 WHEREAS, To do so, residents of this state will need to acquire
14 the knowledge and skills to prepare their homes to survive a
15 wildfire and to take action before the wildfire occurs; and

16 WHEREAS, The educational tools for preventing wildfires and
17 protecting against them when they occur already exist; and

18 WHEREAS, It is essential that we reach out to our communities
19 and individual homeowners with this information, because, armed
20 with knowledge, residents of this state can learn to live safely in
21 a wildfire environment; and

22 WHEREAS, “Wildfire Awareness Week” is a valuable
23 opportunity for California’s fire agencies and communities to
24 reduce the risk of wildfires and increase public safety and
25 awareness through education on fire safety, preparation, and
26 prevention; and

27 WHEREAS, Residents who implement appropriate prefire
28 activities improve the survivability of their homes during a wildfire;
29 now, therefore, be it

30 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
31 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature hereby declares the week
32 of May 3, 2015, to May 9, 2015, inclusive, as Wildfire Awareness
33 Week to raise public awareness and encourage all residents of
34 California to be prepared for wildfires.

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