

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 6, 2016

Senate Concurrent Resolution

No. 107

Introduced by Senator Lara

**(Coauthors: Senators Anderson, Bates, Cannella, Hall, Hertzberg,
Leno, Liu, Nguyen, and Vidak)**

**(Coauthors: Assembly Members Baker, Chávez, Dodd, Maienschein,
Mullin, O'Donnell, and Patterson)**

February 8, 2016

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 107—Relative to Cambodian
Genocide Memorial Week.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 107, as amended, Lara. Cambodian Genocide Memorial Week.

This measure would ~~recognizes~~ *recognize* the week of April 11 to
April 17, 2016, inclusive, as Cambodian Genocide Memorial Week.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The Cambodian people have a long and rich
2 cultural heritage symbolized by the temple city Angkor Wat,
3 considered one of the Wonders of the Ancient World, built between
4 the 9th and 12th centuries, *that* stands as a living icon of the
5 endurance and genius of all Cambodians throughout the world;
6 and
7 WHEREAS, Early connections between the United States and
8 Cambodia began in the 1950s, when Cambodia sent bright and
9 talented college students to universities, including California State
10 Universities in Long Beach and Los Angeles, to study technical
11 trades, engineering, and agriculture with the assistance of the

1 United States Agency for International Development (USAID);
2 and

3 WHEREAS, The relationship between the United States and
4 Cambodia had been forged through educational and professional
5 exchange, and therefore in 1975, with the impending overthrow
6 of the government by the totalitarian Khmer Rouge regime, the
7 United States accepted over 4,000 Cambodian evacuees to ensure
8 their safety; and

9 WHEREAS, April 17, 2016, will mark both the 41st anniversary
10 of the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, seizing control of Cambodia
11 and the beginning of the Cambodian Genocide; and

12 WHEREAS, Between April 17, 1975, and January 7, 1979, the
13 Khmer Rouge of Democratic Kampuchea, led by Pol Pot, *General*
14 ~~Secretary-General~~ of the Communist Party of Kampuchea, and
15 other members of the Standing Committee of the Central
16 Committee of the Communist Party of Kampuchea and their agents,
17 committed acts of genocide and other crimes against humanity;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, The genocide and other crimes against humanity
20 committed against the people of Cambodia, including various
21 religious groups and ethnic minorities, during the Khmer Rouge
22 regime led to the deaths of over 1,700,000 Cambodians, which
23 was 21 percent of the nation's population; and

24 WHEREAS, The Khmer Rouge regime also sought to eliminate
25 all aspects of Cambodian culture by systematically killing those
26 with education, separating families, and destroying institutions
27 such as Buddhist temples, schools, libraries, dance, and music;
28 and

29 WHEREAS, Countless victims have since come forward to tell
30 their stories of imprisonment, starvation, slavery, rape, and
31 systematic forced marriage; and

32 WHEREAS, After the overthrow of the Khmer Rouge regime
33 in 1979, over 140,000 Cambodians came to the United States as
34 refugees, a group of special humanitarian and foreign policy
35 concern to the United States because of the well-founded fear of
36 persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership
37 in a particular social group, or political opinion and thus in need
38 of protection in accordance with the United Nations' 1951
39 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees; and

1 WHEREAS, The State of California has the largest population
2 of Cambodians and the City of Long Beach is known around the
3 world as home to the largest Cambodian community outside of
4 Southeast Asia; and

5 WHEREAS, The Cambodian people have drawn from their
6 cultural history to rebuild their lives and communities through
7 participation in American politics on the local and national levels,
8 by establishing local and international businesses, by developing
9 new art forms and community organizations, and by raising a new
10 generation of Americans who promise to contribute to the future
11 of the State of California and the nation; and

12 WHEREAS, The Cambodian ~~genocide~~ *Genocide* was a human
13 tragedy and must be remembered for the scale of violence and
14 devastation perpetrated against the people of ~~Cambodia~~, *Cambodia*
15 so that it does not happen again, there or in any other country; and

16 WHEREAS, In 1994 the United States Congress passed the
17 Cambodian Genocide Justice Act, committing the American
18 government to the pursuit of justice for the victims of the genocide
19 and affirming the policy of the United States to bring members of
20 the Khmer Rouge to justice for their crimes against humanity; and

21 WHEREAS, The genocide and other crimes against humanity
22 did not succeed in destroying the Cambodian people or their
23 culture, in fact the culture and heritage of the Cambodian people
24 continues to this day through the accomplishments of Cambodians
25 and their descendants; and

26 WHEREAS, The suffering and loss of the Cambodian people
27 and their accomplishments and perseverance in reestablishing
28 families, communities, and enhancing the cultural and historical
29 diversity of our state and nation should be recognized and honored;
30 and

31 WHEREAS, The Cambodian Genocide Memorial Week will
32 honor the survivors and their descendants for their courage and
33 contributions to our state and country. This week will serve as a
34 way to remember those who lost their lives in Cambodia and in
35 genocides around the world; now, therefore, be it

36 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
37 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature hereby recognizes the
38 week of April 11 to April 17, 2016, inclusive, as Cambodian
39 Genocide Memorial Week, and calls upon all Californians to

1 observe the week by participating in appropriate activities and
2 programs; and be it further

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

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7 **CORRECTIONS:** _____

8 **Text—Page 3.**

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