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**Introduced by Senator Allen**

March 31, 2016

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 125—Relative to kindergarten readiness assessment.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 125, as introduced, Allen. Kindergarten readiness assessment tool.

This measure would state that the Legislature will work towards the adoption of a statewide, developmentally appropriate kindergarten readiness assessment tool to assess the readiness of children entering transitional kindergarten and kindergarten.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Children are natural learners and begin learning  
2 the day they are born. Significant brain development occurs in the  
3 earliest years. In fact, the vast majority of brain development occurs  
4 by five years of age; and

5 WHEREAS, District, state, and community-level data on  
6 readiness gaps would help policymakers and community leaders  
7 to target and implement effective early learning programs, as well  
8 as reinforce ongoing efforts to establish a robust, accessible system  
9 of early identification and intervention for developmental delays;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Children entering kindergarten who have the  
12 physical and motor development, social and emotional skills,  
13 approaches to learning, language development, and cognitive  
14 development to be active and engaged learners are 10 times more  
15 likely to meet the expectations of California state standards by

1 grade 3 than those who are less prepared when they start school.  
2 Children reading at grade-level at grade 3 are more likely to  
3 complete high school prepared for college, careers, and civic life;  
4 and

5 WHEREAS, Readiness assessments are a multidimensional  
6 measure of a child's developing abilities and skills upon entering  
7 transitional kindergarten and kindergarten; and

8 WHEREAS, Every teacher, principal, and school administrator  
9 wants his or her young pupils to thrive as they move through their  
10 transitional kindergarten and kindergarten years and into the early  
11 elementary grades; and

12 WHEREAS, A kindergarten readiness assessment should not  
13 just measure pupil proficiency on preacademic skills, but should  
14 also measure the range of developmental domains, including  
15 language, problem solving, self regulation, interpersonal skills,  
16 fine and gross motor skills, and disposition towards learning; and

17 WHEREAS, School readiness assessments provide data that  
18 can be used to improve systems of support for pupils in the  
19 classroom, school, district, region, and state, as well as to ensure  
20 the instruction provided to pupils is the most appropriate based on  
21 their strengths and areas for growth; and

22 WHEREAS, The California Children and Families Commission  
23 (First 5 California) and First 5 county commissions have been  
24 committed to ensuring children are ready for kindergarten,  
25 including investing in kindergarten readiness assessments, for  
26 many years; and

27 WHEREAS, In measuring all of these developmental domains,  
28 an age-appropriate kindergarten readiness assessment tool aligned  
29 to California's state standards would provide valuable information  
30 to parents, teachers, school administrators, and state policymakers  
31 about both the readiness of children and the readiness of early  
32 childhood systems and K-12 educational systems that prepare and  
33 support them; and

34 WHEREAS, Without the consistent, widespread use of a valid  
35 and reliable readiness assessment tool that measures a child's  
36 learning and development holistically, the state currently has no  
37 meaningful way to gauge the diverse and changing needs of its  
38 youngest learners; and

39 WHEREAS, A kindergarten readiness assessment should not  
40 be used for high stakes purposes, such as district, school, or

1 program accountability, to determine entry into school, or to  
2 determine a pupil's educational path; and

3 WHEREAS, Over one-half of the states in the country collect  
4 kindergarten readiness information in a state-level data system,  
5 and federal leaders are increasingly seeking to invest in states that  
6 are gathering and use comprehensive data to build and drive their  
7 early childhood systems; and

8 WHEREAS, A statewide kindergarten readiness tool will ensure  
9 consistent assessment of readiness throughout the state and will  
10 provide critical data to guide planning and resource allocation;  
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Successful statewide implementation of a  
13 kindergarten readiness assessment tool will require local and state  
14 resources and support, and will require leadership to build  
15 commitment among local educational and early childhood system  
16 leaders and other key stakeholders across the state; and

17 WHEREAS, The Legislature must play a leadership role in  
18 establishing a uniform, statewide kindergarten readiness assessment  
19 tool that provides meaningful data so that early childhood system  
20 leaders, teachers, and policymakers can intervene strategically to  
21 promote the success of the next generation; now therefore, be it

22 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*  
23 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature will work towards the  
24 adoption of a statewide kindergarten readiness assessment tool  
25 that is developmentally appropriate to assess the readiness of  
26 children entering transitional kindergarten and kindergarten and  
27 that helps to provide a system that better supports children's  
28 individual and collective needs; and be it further

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