

**Senate Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 131**

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**Introduced by Senator Beall**

*(Coauthors: Assembly Members Achadjian, Alejo, Travis Allen, Arambula, Atkins, Baker, Bigelow, Bloom, Bonilla, Bonta, Brough, Brown, Burke, Campos, Chang, Chau, Chávez, Chiu, Chu, Cooley, Dababneh, Dahle, Daly, Eggman, Frazier, Gallagher, Cristina Garcia, Eduardo Garcia, Gatto, Gomez, Gonzalez, Gordon, Gray, Grove, Hadley, Harper, Holden, Irwin, Jones, Jones-Sawyer, Kim, Lackey, Levine, Linder, Lopez, Low, Maienschein, Mathis, Mayes, McCarty, Medina, Melendez, Mullin, Nazarian, Obernolte, O'Donnell, Olsen, Patterson, Quirk, Rendon, Ridley-Thomas, Rodriguez, Salas, Santiago, Steinorth, Mark Stone, Thurmond, Wagner, Waldron, Weber, Wilk, Williams, and Wood)*

April 14, 2016

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 131—Relative to National Mental Health Awareness Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 131, as amended, Beall. National Mental Health Awareness Month.

This measure would recognize May 2016 as National Mental Health Awareness Month in California to enhance public awareness of mental illness.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Mental illness is one of the leading causes of
- 2 disabilities in the United States, affecting one out of every four

1 families and victimizing both the person with the illness and those  
2 persons who care for and love the person afflicted; and

3 WHEREAS, Serious mental illness costs Americans  
4 approximately \$193.2 billion in lost earnings per year; and

5 WHEREAS, The National Institute of Mental Health has  
6 reported that many people suffer from more than one mental  
7 disorder at a given time and that 45 percent of those with any  
8 mental disorder meet criteria for two or more disorders, including  
9 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, HIV/AIDs, and cancer, and the  
10 severity of the mental disorder strongly relates to comorbidity;  
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Fifty-seven million Americans have a mental  
13 disorder in any given year, but fewer than 40 percent of adults  
14 living with a mental illness, and slightly more than one-half of  
15 youth 8 to 15 years of age, with a mental illness received mental  
16 health services in the last year; and

17 WHEREAS, Although mental illness impacts all people, many  
18 of those in lower-income communities receive less care, poorer  
19 quality of care, and often lack access to culturally competent care,  
20 thereby resulting in mental health disparities; and

21 WHEREAS, Some see negative perceptions about mental health  
22 care as a significant factor contributing to limited or nonexistent  
23 access to care, and some common concerns are stigma, culture,  
24 masculinity, exposure to violence, and lack of information and  
25 awareness, among many others; and

26 WHEREAS, According to the California Reducing Disparities  
27 Project report, being misdiagnosed and given severe mental health  
28 diagnoses can be stigmatizing and can affect the person's  
29 self-esteem, which, in turn, can discourage the person from seeking  
30 help; and

31 WHEREAS, The three major brain diseases, schizophrenia,  
32 bipolar disorder, and depression, adversely affect the economy,  
33 contribute to the rise of incarceration rates, and erode the quality  
34 of life for patients and their loved ones; and

35 WHEREAS, Nearly two-thirds of all people with a diagnosable  
36 mental illness do not receive mental health treatment due to stigma,  
37 lack of community-based resources, inadequate diagnosis, or no  
38 diagnosis; and

39 WHEREAS, An estimated 70 percent of all youth in the juvenile  
40 justice system have at least one mental health condition, and at

1 least 20 percent live with severe mental illness that is usually  
2 undiagnosed, misdiagnosed, untreated, or ineffectively treated,  
3 thus leaving those detained in the juvenile justice system in a  
4 vulnerable condition; and

5 WHEREAS, There is a need to improve public awareness of  
6 mental illness and to strengthen local and national awareness of  
7 brain diseases, so that all those with mental illness may receive  
8 adequate and appropriate treatment that will result in their  
9 becoming fully functioning members of society; and

10 WHEREAS, Access to mental health treatment and services is  
11 of paramount importance; and

12 WHEREAS, There is a need to encourage primary care  
13 physicians to offer screenings, to partner with mental health care  
14 providers, to seek appropriate referrals to specialists, and to  
15 encourage timely and accurate diagnoses of mental disorders; and

16 WHEREAS, The Legislature wishes to enhance public  
17 awareness of mental illness, now, therefore, be it

18 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*  
19 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature of the State of California  
20 hereby recognizes May 2016 as National Mental Health Awareness  
21 Month in California to enhance public awareness of mental illness;  
22 and be it further

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