

**Introduced by Senator Fuller**

**(Principal coauthor: Senator Runner)**

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Wieckowski)**

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Travis Allen, Baker, Chávez, Lackey,  
and Olsen)

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 142—Relative to Valley Fever  
Awareness Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 142, as introduced, Fuller. Valley Fever Awareness Month

This measure would declare August 2016 as Valley Fever Awareness  
Month.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Valley Fever (coccidioidomycosis), a progressive,  
2 multisymptom, respiratory disorder, is a debilitating disease; and

3 WHEREAS, Valley Fever is caused by the inhalation of tiny  
4 airborne fungi that live in the soil but are released into the air by  
5 soil disturbance or wind; and

6 WHEREAS, Valley Fever attacks the respiratory system, causing  
7 infections that can lead to symptoms that resemble a cold,  
8 influenza, or pneumonia; and

9 WHEREAS, If left untreated or mistreated, infection can spread  
10 from the lungs into the bloodstream, causing inflammation to the  
11 skin, permanent damage to lung and bone tissue, and swelling of  
12 the membrane surrounding the brain, leading to meningitis, which  
13 can be devastating and even fatal; and

1 WHEREAS, Once serious symptoms of Valley Fever appear,  
2 including pneumonia and labored breathing, prompt treatment with  
3 often toxic antifungal drugs must be given, which is especially  
4 disagreeable for patients who require the drugs to be injected  
5 beneath the base of their skulls for meningitis and which can cause  
6 side effects such as nausea, fever, and kidney damage; and

7 WHEREAS, Within California alone, Valley Fever is found in  
8 portions of the Sacramento Valley, all of the San Joaquin Valley,  
9 desert regions, and portions of southern California; and

10 WHEREAS, California does not have an official statewide  
11 method of tracking the rate of Valley Fever infections; and

12 WHEREAS, According to the federal Centers for Disease  
13 Control and Prevention (CDC), Valley Fever infection rates rose  
14 twelvefold nationwide from 1995 to 2009, and researchers estimate  
15 that the fungus infects more than 150,000 people each year who  
16 either suffer serious ailments without knowing the cause of their  
17 illness or escape detection of the disease; and

18 WHEREAS, According to the CDC, between 1999 and 2011,  
19 the rate of infection of Valley Fever in California rose more than  
20 600 percent, from 939 cases in 1999 to 5,697 cases in 2011, before  
21 declining to 2,243 cases in 2014; and

22 WHEREAS, In Kern County, the rate of infection of Valley  
23 Fever more than tripled from 2009, for a total of 2,051 cases in  
24 2010 and 2,734 cases in 2011, before declining to 1210 cases in  
25 2014; and

26 WHEREAS, San Joaquin County Public Health Services  
27 recorded 27 cases of Valley Fever in 2009, 46 cases in 2010, and  
28 123 cases in 2011; and

29 WHEREAS, Although the rate of Valley Fever infection in  
30 California has declined since 2011, it continues to infect  
31 Californians at more than twice the rate of infection in 1999; and

32 WHEREAS, Misdiagnosis of Valley Fever is so pervasive that  
33 experts say some people suffer and even die from Valley Fever  
34 without knowing they ever had the disease; and

35 WHEREAS, The Governor declared a Drought State of  
36 Emergency on January 17, 2014, and California is experiencing  
37 record dry conditions; and

38 WHEREAS, Dry conditions and lack of precipitation present  
39 urgent problems regarding Valley Fever; and

1 WHEREAS, Valley Fever is usually found in soil two to eight  
2 inches from the surface, and the extreme dry conditions caused by  
3 drought increase the chances of coccidioidomycosis airborne fungi  
4 exposure; and

5 WHEREAS, Central Valley prison inmates have been infected  
6 by Valley Fever at epidemic rates, contributing significantly to the  
7 state’s prison health care costs; and

8 WHEREAS, The rapid spread of Valley Fever at state prisons  
9 in the Central Valley has resulted in multiple prison inmate deaths  
10 and prompted calls to close certain affected prisons, further  
11 exacerbating efforts to comply with federal orders to reduce prison  
12 overcrowding; and

13 WHEREAS, Valley Fever kills between 100 to 200 more  
14 Americans every year than tuberculosis; and

15 WHEREAS, Valley Fever most seriously affects the young, the  
16 elderly, those with lowered immune systems, and those of African  
17 American and Filipino descent; and

18 WHEREAS, Valley Fever is a disease that has been studied for  
19 the past 100 years but still remains impossible to control and  
20 difficult to treat; and

21 WHEREAS, There is no known cure for Valley Fever, but  
22 researchers are closer than ever to finding a much-needed vaccine  
23 against this devastating disease; and

24 WHEREAS, The research effort to find a vaccine for Valley  
25 Fever and a funding partnership including the State of California  
26 were approved by the Legislature and signed by Governor Wilson  
27 in 1997; now, therefore, be it

28 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*  
29 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature does hereby proclaim  
30 August 2016 as Valley Fever Awareness Month; and be it further

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