

**Assembly Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 10**

**Introduced by Assembly Member Floyd**

February 4, 1997

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 10—Relative to the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Capitol Park.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 10, as introduced, Floyd. Veterans Memorials: The Wall That Heals.

This measure would encourage all Californians to take part in ceremonies concerning The Wall That Heals, and that all measures be taken to inform Californians of related ceremonies so that they are given an opportunity to remember and honor the service, efforts, and sacrifices of veterans.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The State of California has the largest  
2 United States veterans population in the nation,  
3 comprising some 3.3 million armed services veterans  
4 (12.3 percent of the nationwide veteran population of  
5 nearly 27 million) who represent an impressive one-fifth  
6 of the state's total population; and  
7 WHEREAS, It is estimated that 20.6 million (77  
8 percent) of the total veteran population alive today are  
9 wartime veterans, and, within California alone, nearly  
10 300,000 of those veterans are disabled, and approximately



1 one-eighth of these veterans have experienced substance  
2 abuse or post-traumatic stress disorders; and

3 WHEREAS, It is estimated that there are more than  
4 3,000 American servicemen still prisoners of war (POW),  
5 missing in action (MIA), and unaccounted for in Vietnam  
6 and Korea; and

7 WHEREAS, According to figures from the 1996  
8 California Department of Veterans Affairs, American  
9 participation and casualties from the following wars were  
10 estimated as: Mexican War (1846–48) 79,000 participants,  
11 13,000 deaths in service; Indian Wars (1861–98) 106,000  
12 participants, 1,000 deaths in service; United States Civil  
13 War (1861–65) 2,213,000 Union participants, 364,000  
14 Union deaths in service, 1,000,000 Confederate  
15 participants, 134,000 Confederate deaths in service;  
16 Spanish-American War (1898–1902) 392,000 participants,  
17 11,000 deaths in service; World War I (1917–18) 392,000  
18 participants, 116,000 deaths in service; World War II  
19 (1940–45) 16,535,000 participants, 406,000 deaths in  
20 service; Korean War (1950–53) 5,764,143 participants,  
21 33,651 deaths in service; Vietnam War (1964–73) 8,744,000  
22 participants, 58,168 deaths in service; and the Persian  
23 Gulf War (1991) 467,539 participants, 148 deaths; and

24 WHEREAS, In times of peace, when the veteran's  
25 service is not needed, it is an unfortunate but irrevocable  
26 fact that Californians, like all other Americans, all too  
27 quickly forget that it is the courage and sacrifice of those  
28 veterans that preserve and maintain the freedom that we  
29 enjoy; and

30 WHEREAS, The practice of forgetting about our debt  
31 to our veterans took on an entirely different meaning  
32 when our Vietnam veterans returned home to discover,  
33 tragically, that not only did many Americans not want to  
34 honor and pay homage to them, indeed, many Americans  
35 wanted to forget them; and

36 WHEREAS, More than 350,000 California veterans  
37 served in Vietnam, which resulted in 40,000 of them being  
38 wounded and 5,822 being killed or missing in action, or  
39 more than 10 percent of the nation's total; and



1 WHEREAS, More California residents died in Vietnam  
2 than residents of any other state, and more Californians  
3 received the Medal of Honor, the Bronze Star, and the  
4 Purple Heart than veterans of any other state; and

5 WHEREAS, The Vietnam War divided America like no  
6 other event since the United States Civil War, and after  
7 nearly a decade of dissent and protest and of many  
8 Americans trying to forget the Vietnam War, many  
9 Americans ended up forgetting the Vietnam veterans  
10 who came home to no marching bands and no welcome  
11 home parades, and who went for years and years without  
12 any sort of positive recognition; and

13 WHEREAS, For many, many thousands of those  
14 veterans, the Vietnam War did not end, and has not  
15 ended, as they continue to fight their own personal war  
16 within themselves; and

17 WHEREAS, With the construction of the National  
18 Vietnam War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.,  
19 many Americans finally found the will to remember, and  
20 all the homage due the Vietnam veterans could finally be  
21 expressed; and

22 WHEREAS, In many ways, the national memorial has  
23 done more to heal the wounds of the Vietnam War than  
24 any proclamation, or any parade, could do, since the  
25 memorial serves as a tribute to the sacrifice, a recognition  
26 of the loss, and a symbol of the wound that we began to  
27 heal, and in simple terms, the memorial serves as a  
28 mourning place where Americans can come to physically  
29 touch the memory of loved ones they lost or strangers  
30 they honor for their sacrifices; and

31 WHEREAS, The history of the California Vietnam  
32 Veterans Memorial began when Herman Woods, a  
33 double amputee who served in the 1st Air Cavalry  
34 Division, United States Army (1970), returned to  
35 California from the dedication of the National Vietnam  
36 Veterans Memorial in our nation's capitol in Washington,  
37 D.C.; and

38 WHEREAS, Herman Woods began a grassroots effort  
39 to assist then Assembly Member Richard E. Floyd, a  
40 Korean War combat veteran, in passing Floyd's measure,



1 Assembly Bill No. 650, which proposed that a California  
2 Vietnam Veterans Memorial be built entirely from  
3 private funds, and it was then that former Captain Brian  
4 Thomas “B.T.” Collins, a United States Army veteran who  
5 was a member of the Green Berets, who served two tours  
6 of duty in Vietnam, who was wounded, and who also later  
7 served in the California State Assembly, became involved  
8 with the memorial and his tireless efforts were a driving  
9 force in the establishment and completion of the  
10 memorial prior to his early death; and

11 WHEREAS, The newly formed Vietnam Veterans  
12 Memorial Commission was comprised of nine veterans,  
13 eight of whom served in Vietnam and who included the  
14 following persons: Linda J. McKlenahan, President; Leo  
15 K. Thosness, Congressional Medal of Honor winner and  
16 Vice President; Gregory C. Green, Treasurer; Abel A.  
17 Cota, Secretary; B.T. Collins, member; Don A.  
18 Drumheller, member; Jesse G. Ugalde, member; Senator  
19 Jim Ellis, member; Assembly Member Richard E. Floyd,  
20 member and author of Assembly Bill No. 650; and Jerri L.  
21 Ewen, Executive Officer; led to the creation of the  
22 California Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the theme of  
23 which reflects “the overwhelming majority of those who  
24 were killed in Vietnam: 19-year old infantry soldiers, their  
25 youth, comradery, and fatigue of the war and [reflects]  
26 the American women who served,” with the winning  
27 entry in the opening design competition being awarded  
28 to Michael Larson, a Marine Corps Vietnam veteran, and  
29 Thomas Chytrowski; and

30 WHEREAS, President Bill Clinton, in recently  
31 awarding the Presidential Medal of Freedom to former  
32 United States Senator Robert Dole, unveiled the winning  
33 design for still another memorial, this one a National  
34 World War II Memorial to pay homage to the 16 million  
35 men and women who served in that war; and

36 WHEREAS, For years and years, California has had  
37 plans for a memorial that will be privately financed, one  
38 that will honor all California veterans who have served in  
39 the armed services since statehood in 1850, a memorial  
40 that, hopefully, will be a reality by the close of 1997; and



1 WHEREAS, These monuments have revived  
2 California's interest in the sacrifice of all our veterans and  
3 have focused a renewed attention on our Vietnam  
4 veterans, many of whom, especially the homeless, simply  
5 have never had the resources to travel back to  
6 Washington, D.C. to visit the National Vietnam Veterans  
7 Memorial; and

8 WHEREAS, The Wall That Heals is a 250-foot wide  
9 replica of the National Memorial that travels all across  
10 America, giving veterans and nonveterans a chance to  
11 share a common bond of sacrifice with the 58,202 men and  
12 women who gave their lives in Vietnam; and

13 WHEREAS, The Wall That Heals brings the souls of  
14 those 58,202 back home to their buddies, their wives and  
15 husbands, parents, children, neighbors, and coworkers,  
16 and allows them to exist once more in the comfort and  
17 peace of familiar surroundings; and

18 WHEREAS, Assembly Member Richard E. Floyd has  
19 made arrangements for the Wall That Heals to be in  
20 Sacramento and in four additional sites in California from  
21 early February to March, 1997; and

22 WHEREAS, The Wall That Heals, like the memorial in  
23 Washington, D.C., transcends Vietnam by helping our  
24 nation renew its relationship with veterans of all wars,  
25 because viewers of the wall, from veterans to school  
26 children, will realize a deeper appreciation of the role  
27 that veterans have played throughout the history of our  
28 country; now, therefore, be it

29 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the*  
30 *Senate thereof concurring,* That all Californians be  
31 encouraged to take part in ceremonies concerning The  
32 Wall That Heals, including opening ceremonies, when it  
33 is in an area near them, and that all steps and measures  
34 necessary to inform all Californians as to the date of those  
35 ceremonies and locating where The Wall That Heals will  
36 be sited, be taken so that all Californians will be given an  
37 opportunity to remember and honor the service, the  
38 efforts, and the sacrifices of those veterans, and to pay  
39 homage to those veterans who are still alive; and be it  
40 further



1 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly  
2 transmit a suitably prepared copy of this resolution to the  
3 author for appropriate distribution.

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