

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY AUGUST 7, 2000

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 8, 2000

Senate Concurrent Resolution

No. 76

Introduced by Senator Vasconcellos

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Alquist—~~and Dutra~~), Dutra, Aanestad, Ackerman, Aroner, Bates, Battin, Baugh, Bock, Brewer, Briggs, Calderon, Campbell, Cardenas, Cardoza, Cedillo, Corbett, Correa, Cox, Cunneen, Davis, Dickerson, Ducheny, Firebaugh, Gallegos, Granlund, Havice, Hertzberg, Honda, House, Jackson, Keeley, Kuehl, Leach, Lempert, Leonard, Longville, Lowenthal, Machado, Maddox, Maldonado, Margett, Mazzoni, McClintock, Migden, Nakano, Olberg, Oller, Robert Pacheco, Rod Pacheco, Papan, Pescetti, Reyes, Romero, Runner, Scott, Shelley, Steinberg, Strickland, Strom-Martin, Thomson, Torlakson, Villaraigosa, Vincent, Washington, Wayne, Wesson, Wiggins, Wildman, and Zettel)

April 12, 2000

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 76—Relative to Elias Cortez and the Department of Information Technology staff.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 76, as amended, Vasconcellos. Elias Cortez and the Department of Information Technology staff.

This measure would commend, congratulate, and express gratitude to Elias Cortez, the Director of Information and Technology, and his staff for his and their profound, critical, and lasting contribution to the continued well-being of our



state and our citizens. The measure would encourage Mr. Cortez to direct his talents, wisdom, knowledge, collaborative nature, and dedicated staff toward the challenges that the state and the people of California face as the state ventures further into the age of information technology.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, In the 1960's, computer programmers
2 decided to program computers so that they recognized
3 the year in a date field with only the last two digits, and
4 computers were programmed to assume that the first two
5 digits in a date field would be "19"; and

6 WHEREAS, The world's computers faced the potential
7 for critical, and in some cases life-threatening, errors and
8 full-scale breakdown when computers turned over to the
9 first day of the year 2000 if they did not recognize the new
10 first two digits "20"; and

11 WHEREAS, This phenomenon came to be known as
12 the "Y2K Bug" whose recognition and resolution became
13 a major cause for concern for all of us; and

14 WHEREAS, The possible ramifications of the Y2K Bug
15 included widespread and profound breakdown and
16 chaos, including the loss of life-essential services and
17 many other less threatening yet serious failures such as
18 interrupted telephone and electrical services, inaccurate
19 bank transactions, inoperable hospital equipment, failed
20 delivery of food and medicine, unsafe elevators, and
21 delayed service from government entities; and

22 WHEREAS, The State of California was obligated to
23 play a leading role to ensure that all of our public and
24 private computer systems would not be impacted and
25 rendered inoperable by the Y2K Bug; and

26 WHEREAS, The State of California initiated its Y2K
27 remediation program in 1997 to modify every date field
28 to four digits to indicate the year, and assigned
29 responsibility to the Department of Information
30 Technology (DOIT) for accomplishing this in a timely
31 manner; and

32 WHEREAS, The Legislature, through a joint oversight
33 committee, began monitoring and helping to guide our



1 state's comprehensive Y2K public and private
2 remediation efforts, beginning in May 1997; and

3 WHEREAS, When Governor Gray Davis was
4 inaugurated in January 1999, he embraced Y2K
5 remediation as one of his first and most urgent priorities;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, One of Governor Davis' earliest
8 appointees was Elias Cortez as director of the
9 Department of Information Technology and chief
10 information officer for the state, making him the person
11 directly responsible for assuring our full and timely
12 compliance with all action necessary to thwart the threat
13 of the Y2K Bug; and

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Cortez moved immediately, smartly,
15 and comprehensively to engage himself and his
16 department and the entirety of our state government in
17 the Y2K remediation effort with all necessary diligence
18 and urgency and imbued each and all of his colleagues
19 with the same commitment to diligent and urgent
20 remediation of the Y2K Bug; and

21 WHEREAS, Mr. Cortez, in collaboration with other
22 technology experts, promulgated an entirely new,
23 thoroughgoing, and credible remediation action plan that
24 effectively identified and targeted mission critical
25 computer systems, mapped essential steps and target
26 dates for implementation, employed a sufficient number
27 of outside consultants to assist state agencies with mission
28 critical systems, and engaged the regular guidance of
29 private technology and business leaders; and

30 WHEREAS, Mr. Cortez and his staff dedicated
31 themselves and their time and energy almost exclusively
32 to the task of ensuring that every step in the remediation
33 plan was carried out in an effective and timely manner;
34 and

35 WHEREAS, Mr. Cortez and his staff fully exercised,
36 even asserted, all the authority given them by Governor
37 Davis to compel state entities to meet their remediation
38 goals with all due diligence and due haste; and

39 WHEREAS, Not satisfied with remediating only our
40 state's computers, Mr. Cortez stretched his mandate to



1 facilitate remediation for all California local
2 governments, utilities, hospitals, and the private sector;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Due to the talent, dedication,
5 commitment, and thoroughgoing smart hard work of Mr.
6 Cortez, his staff, and colleagues, our State of California
7 avoided any noticeable impact by the Y2K Bug; and

8 WHEREAS, Due to smart implementation of his Y2K
9 remediation plan, Mr. Cortez was concurrently able to
10 improve and enhance many of our state's computer
11 systems; now, therefore, be it

12 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the*
13 *Assembly thereof concurring,* That the Legislature of the
14 State of California heartily commends, congratulates, and
15 expresses our deep and abiding gratitude to Elias Cortez,
16 the Director of Information Technology, and his staff at
17 the Department of Information Technology, for his and
18 their profound, critical, and lasting contribution to the
19 continued well-being of our state and our citizens; and be
20 it further

21 *Resolved,* That Mr. Cortez, after an appropriate period
22 of respite and rejuvenation (both needed and deserved),
23 is heartily encouraged to direct his considerable talents,
24 his wisdom and knowledge, his collaborative nature, and
25 dedicated staff toward the ever mounting and
26 increasingly complex challenges that the state and the
27 people of California face as our state ventures further into
28 this age of information technology; and be it further

29 *Resolved,* That the Secretary of the Senate transmit
30 copies of this resolution to the Department of
31 Information Technology and to the author for
32 appropriate distribution.

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