

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 11

Introduced by Assembly Member Furutani

March 25, 2009

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 11—Relative to National Multicultural Cancer Awareness Week.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AJR 11, as introduced, Furutani. National Multicultural Cancer Awareness Week.

This measure would designate the week of April 19 to 25, 2009, inclusive, as “National Multicultural Cancer Awareness Week,” and would encourage the private sector and the state and federal governments to promote policies and programs that seek to reduce cancer disparities and improve cancer prevention, detection, treatment, and followup care for all Californians.

Fiscal committee: yes.

- 1 WHEREAS, National Multicultural Cancer Awareness Week
2 has been observed across the country each year since 1987 to bring
3 attention to the disparities of cancer among medically underserved
4 populations; and
5 WHEREAS, The American Cancer Society is participating in
6 National Multicultural Cancer Awareness Week to point out the
7 disparities in cancer burden and to encourage public and private
8 sector commitments to helping eliminate these disparities; and
9 WHEREAS, California is the most populous and ethnically and
10 culturally diverse state in the country, and thus, in a position to

1 provide leadership for the nation to address the reduction of the
2 incidence of cancer among all races and genders; and

3 WHEREAS, In California, disparities exist in knowledge about
4 cancer, cancer survival, and access to early detection, high-quality
5 treatment, health care coverage, and health care. Systemic
6 inequities also exist, including differences in occupational hazards,
7 environmental exposures to pollution and other toxins, access to
8 education, nutrition, physical activity, safe neighborhoods, healthy
9 foods, and other factors that contribute to an increased or reduced
10 risk of cancer; and

11 WHEREAS, The risk of developing and dying from cancer
12 varies considerably among different cultural populations in
13 California. The medically underserved are often diagnosed at later
14 stages, and with a higher incidence of cancers with higher
15 mortality, like lung cancer, and are more likely to receive lower
16 quality health care; and

17 WHEREAS, In California, African American males have the
18 highest overall cancer incidence and mortality rates. African
19 American women are more likely to die of breast cancer, although
20 non-Hispanic white women are the most likely to be diagnosed
21 with the disease. African Americans have substantially higher rates
22 of cancers of the stomach, liver, larynx, myeloma, and Kaposi's
23 sarcoma than non-Hispanic whites. African American men are at
24 especially high risk for prostate cancer, more than any other racial
25 and ethnic group; and

26 WHEREAS, In California, Asian and Pacific Islanders are the
27 only racial and ethnic group within which cancer is the leading
28 cause of death. Lung cancer is the most common cancer among
29 Laotian women, while breast cancer is the most common cancer
30 among women of all racial and ethnic groups. Lung cancer is the
31 most common cancer among Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese
32 men, while prostate cancer is the most common cancer for men in
33 most ethnic groups. Asian and Pacific Islanders and Latinos have
34 substantially higher rates of liver and stomach cancer than other
35 groups. Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese women have much
36 higher rates of cervical cancer than non-Hispanic white women.
37 Samoan and Tongan women have higher rates of cancers than
38 non-Hispanic white women. Stomach and liver cancers are among
39 the top five cancers in most Asian and Pacific Islander groups.
40 Asian Americans have among the lowest rates of screening for

1 breast, cervical, and colorectal cancers. A significant number of
2 Korean Americans have never heard of the pap smear test. There
3 remains a lack of data about factors related to cancer, cancer
4 control, and effective interventions among Asian and Pacific
5 Islanders; and

6 WHEREAS, In California, Latinos have substantially higher
7 rates of stomach and liver cancers than other Californians. Latinos
8 have higher rates of acute lymphocytic leukemia, Kaposi's
9 sarcoma, and cervical cancer than non-Hispanic whites. Cancer is
10 the second leading cause of death for Latinos. Latinos have the
11 highest likelihood of being uninsured. Latino women have the
12 highest risk of developing cervical cancer, about twice as high as
13 non-Hispanic white women, African American women, and Asian
14 and Pacific Islander women; and

15 WHEREAS, Members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and
16 transgender community are at greater risk for cancer, face specific
17 challenges accessing quality health care because of insurance
18 policies that fail to cover same-sex partners, and may hesitate to
19 access health care because of previous discrimination in health
20 care settings. Lesbians have fewer mammograms, pelvic
21 examinations, and pap smear tests than heterosexual women. There
22 remains a lack of data about factors related to cancer, cancer
23 control, and effective interventions in the lesbian, gay, bisexual,
24 and transgender community; now, therefore, be it

25 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*
26 *California, jointly*, That the Legislature declares the week of April
27 19 to 25, 2009, inclusive, as "National Multicultural Cancer
28 Awareness Week," and encourages the private sector and the state
29 and federal governments to promote policies and programs that
30 seek to reduce cancer disparities and as a result, improve cancer
31 prevention, detection, treatment, and followup care for all
32 Californians; and be it further

33 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
34 of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United
35 States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the
36 Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and
37 Representative from California in the Congress of the United
38 States.

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