

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 40

Introduced by Assembly Members Huffman, Solorio, and Caballero

April 5, 2010

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 40—Relative to gang violence prevention.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 40, as introduced, Huffman. Gang violence prevention.

This measure would urge Congress and the President to establish more effective mechanisms by which the federal government may encourage comprehensive local gang violence reduction plans that reflect promising and best practices and that combine gang prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies, by providing greater flexibility in the use of federal funds for multijurisdictional and cross-disciplinary approaches.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Safety is basic to personal and civic health, and
- 2 gang violence has not only wounded and killed community
- 3 members, but has rendered some segments of California's
- 4 communities dysfunctional; and
- 5 WHEREAS, Gang violence is a plague that results in the tragic
- 6 loss of life and serious injury, undermines families and
- 7 neighborhoods, threatens the well-being of cities, including the
- 8 ability of community members to be safe outside their homes, and
- 9 affects an overall sense of community connectedness and hope;
- 10 and

1 WHEREAS, Gang activity in California has resulted in 2,771
2 homicides between 2005 and 2007, according to the Governor's
3 Office of Gang and Youth Violence Policy; and

4 WHEREAS, According to the federal Office of Juvenile Justice
5 and Delinquency Prevention, the growth of youth gang violence
6 and the proliferation of youth gangs into smaller cities and rural
7 areas in recent years have focused public attention on the youth
8 gang problem and made it an increasingly significant social policy
9 issue; and

10 WHEREAS, Addressing and preventing gang-related violence
11 requires the use of a three-pronged approach based on stopping
12 the violence and victimization, intervening with those on the edge,
13 and preventing gang participation through the development of
14 individual and community well-being strategies; and

15 WHEREAS, Adopting comprehensive, communitywide plans
16 that define and harmonize clear goals regarding enforcement,
17 prevention, and intervention that are in concert with regional efforts
18 has proven results; and

19 WHEREAS, Gang violence prevention strategies are furthered
20 by using data-driven local tactics and strategies, utilizing
21 evidence-based programs and approaches when available, and,
22 where evidence-based programs do not exist, stressing clarity of
23 outcomes and performance measures; and

24 WHEREAS, Reducing gang activity through prevention results
25 in positive outcomes, including the decrease of not only homicides,
26 but also vandalism, illicit activities, and youth gang membership
27 in target areas; and

28 WHEREAS, Gang violence reduction also decreases pressures
29 on hospitals, emergency rooms, and county jails, and increases
30 school attendance; and

31 WHEREAS, Preventing gang activity also provides a way for
32 cities and counties to reinvest regional resources in the community
33 through services and programs to former gang members, including
34 job training, education, counseling, and tattoo removal to keep
35 them from returning to their previous lifestyles, instead of diverting
36 funds to prosecution and incarceration; and

37 WHEREAS, Local economic hardship has resulted in deep cuts
38 to public safety funding in cities and counties, including law
39 enforcement personnel layoffs, closure of community facilities,

1 and halts on improvements to, or construction of, public safety
2 facilities; and

3 WHEREAS, Federal grant moneys are an important resource
4 for city and county governments, schools, and community and
5 faith-based organizations to fund programs related to
6 community-oriented policing, drug prevention and enforcement,
7 neighborhood stabilization, at-risk youth mentoring, continuing
8 education, youth employment, and job training; and

9 WHEREAS, Cities and counties that have shown manifest
10 commitment to comprehensive planning, implementation, and data
11 sharing involving key regional stakeholders could better fund their
12 gang violence prevention strategies if given more flexibility with
13 their existing resources; now, therefore, be it

14 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*
15 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature respectfully urges the
16 Congress and the President of the United States to establish more
17 effective mechanisms by which the federal government may
18 encourage comprehensive local gang violence reduction plans that
19 reflect promising and best practices and that combine gang
20 prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies, by providing
21 greater flexibility in the use of federal funds for multijurisdictional
22 and cross-disciplinary approaches; and be it further

23 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
24 of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United
25 States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the
26 Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and
27 Representative from California in the Congress of the United
28 States.