

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 8, 2010

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 18, 2010

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009–10 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 123

Introduced by Assembly Member Chesbro

(Coauthor: Assembly Members Adams, Ammiano, Anderson, Arambula, Bass, Beall, Bill Berryhill, Tom Berryhill, Block, Blumenfield, Bradford, Brownley, Buchanan, Caballero, Charles Calderon, Carter, Conway, Cook, Coto, Davis, De La Torre, De Leon, DeVore, Emmerson, Eng, Evans, Feuer, Fletcher, Fong, Fuentes, Fuller, Furutani, Gaines, Garrick, Hagman, Hall, Harkey, Hayashi, Hernandez, Hill, Huffman, Jeffries, Jones, Knight, Lieu, Bonnie Lowenthal, Ma, Mendoza, Miller, Monning, Nava, Nestande, Niello, Nielsen, John A. Perez, Portantino, Ruskin, Salas, Saldana, Silva, Skinner, Smyth, Solorio, Audra Strickland, Swanson, Torlakson, Torres, Torrico, Tran, Villines, and Yamada)

February 12, 2010

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 123—Relative to the California Memorial Project Remembrance Day.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 123, as amended, Chesbro. California Memorial Project Remembrance Day.

This measure would proclaim the 3rd Monday of each September as California Memorial Project Remembrance Day in California, to honor and restore dignity to individuals who lived and died in California institutions.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Since 1852 when the first California state institution
2 opened, the state has provided services to persons with disabilities
3 in state institutions, including state hospitals and developmental
4 centers; and

5 WHEREAS, From the mid-1880s to the 1960s, more than 45,000
6 individuals passed away while residents of a state institution, and
7 information about these patients is incomplete; and

8 WHEREAS, For the most part, the remains of the individuals
9 who died at state institutions were placed in unmarked or numbered
10 graves in mass sites, where numbered markers long ago
11 disappeared and many records identifying where bodies were
12 buried have been misplaced or destroyed; and

13 WHEREAS, Some of the state institutions involved include the
14 following 14 institutes: Agnews Developmental Center, Atascadero
15 State Hospital, Camarillo State Hospital, DeWitt State Hospital,
16 Fairview Developmental Center, Lanterman Developmental Center,
17 Mendocino State Hospital, Metropolitan State Hospital, Modesto
18 State Hospital, Napa State Hospital, Patton State Hospital,
19 Porterville Developmental Center, Sonoma Developmental Center,
20 and Stockton State Hospital; and

21 WHEREAS, Gravesites of unknown individuals who have
22 passed away while living in a state institution include, but are not
23 limited to:

24 (a) The cremated remains of 2,284 individuals who died at the
25 Modesto State Institution and Stockton Developmental Center at
26 Park View in Manteca.

27 (b) The remains of many individuals who received treatment at
28 the Metropolitan State Hospital in the early 1980s relocated to area
29 cemeteries.

30 (c) Napa State Hospital, where from 1875 to 1924, inclusive,
31 an estimated 4,368 individuals were buried. Napa State Hospital
32 also interred residents at the St. Helena Public Cemetery, a local
33 paupers field.

34 (d) Patton State Hospital, where from 1893 to 1934, inclusive,
35 an estimated 2,024 individuals were buried.

36 (e) The remains of 1,418 individuals were buried in a cemetery
37 now located in a field on the campus of the Sonoma Developmental
38 Center; and

39 WHEREAS, When some state institutions closed, they sold their
40 land and exhumed remains to county cemeteries, and the California

1 Memorial Project has not identified all of the county cemeteries
2 where former residents of state institutions have been interred; and

3 WHEREAS, The California Memorial Project is a collaboration
4 of the California Network of Mental Health Clients, Disability
5 Rights California, and People First California, that partners with
6 the State Department of Mental Health and the Department of
7 Developmental Services, to honor and restore dignity to individuals
8 who lived and died in state institutions; and

9 WHEREAS, The legislation, Senate Bill 1448 (Chapter 440 of
10 the Statutes of 2002) and Senate Bill 258 (Chapter 391 of the
11 Statutes of 2006), authored by Senator Wesley Chesbro established
12 the partnership between the California Memorial Project and the
13 state to identify the location of gravesites at existing state
14 institutions, identify the names of the patients whose remains were
15 donated for medical research and the entity to which the remains
16 were donated, work with the State Department of Mental Health
17 and other state agencies to research the records of deaths and
18 burials at cemeteries located on state institution grounds, and
19 develop a plan for the restoration of cemeteries and gravesites of
20 institutionalized persons; and

21 WHEREAS, The goals of the California Memorial Project
22 include to restore cemeteries or graves where individuals from
23 state institutions are buried, to preserve the history of the residents
24 of state institutions, and to document the history of the client and
25 consumer movement in California; and

26 WHEREAS, To further its mission, the California Memorial
27 Project restores and memorializes the cemeteries at state institutions
28 and county cemeteries, and works to place memorials at cemeteries
29 and other sites to remember people who have died in state
30 institutions. Two monuments have been placed so far, one erected
31 on the California State University (CSU) Stanislaus campus, and
32 another at the Stockton Rural Cemetery where 42 sets of remains
33 of individuals who died in state institutions unearthed at CSU
34 Stanislaus were reinterred. Future plans include a Napa State
35 Hospital Memorial, a monument at the Patton State Hospital, and
36 a boulder monument to be placed at the Ukiah Cemetery in honor
37 of individuals who died while institutionalized at the Mendocino
38 State Hospital; and

39 WHEREAS, Beginning in 2003 the California Memorial Project
40 has held a Remembrance Day to remember and honor individuals

1 who lived and died in state institutions on the third Monday of
2 each September, the anniversary of the signing of the legislation
3 that established the California Memorial Project partnership with
4 the state; and

5 WHEREAS, On the September 21, 2009, Remembrance Day,
6 over 700 community members, self-advocates, family, friends,
7 state institution survivors, and disability advocates gathered at the
8 Parkview Cemetery in Manteca, Napa State Hospital in Napa,
9 Metropolitan State Hospital in Norwalk, Patton State Hospital in
10 Patton, Hillcrest Cemetery in Porterville, Agnews Historic
11 Cemetery in Santa Clara, Sonoma Developmental Center in
12 Eldridge, Stockton Rural Cemetery in Stockton, and Ukiah
13 Cemetery in Ukiah, for Remembrance Day ceremonies; and

14 WHEREAS, In California's recent history, numerous
15 Californians with disabilities were institutionalized and died in
16 state facilities. Today, however, many people with disabilities live
17 full and productive lives in the community; and

18 WHEREAS, Attention to the California Memorial Project and
19 its work to restore cemeteries, create memorials, develop oral
20 histories, and hold Remembrance Day ceremonies to honor those
21 individuals are critical pieces of California's history and serve as
22 an opportunity to reflect upon the strides made in reducing the
23 stigma of disability, including psychiatric and developmental
24 disability, as well as promoting community awareness and
25 education; and

26 WHEREAS, Efforts to restore dignity to individuals whose
27 remains are buried in gravesites on state institution lands deserve
28 recognition and support; now, therefore, be it

29 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
30 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature of State of California
31 hereby proclaims the third Monday of each September as California
32 Memorial Project Remembrance Day; and be it further

33 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
34 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

O