

Introduced by Senator Corbett

February 23, 2009

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 17—Relative to Irish American Heritage Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 17, as introduced, Corbett. Irish American Heritage Month.

This measure would designate March 2009 as Irish American Heritage Month in honor of the multitude of contributions that Irish Americans have made to the country and state.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Millions of Irish people, faced with severe hardship
2 due to famine and poverty in their nation, immigrated to the United
3 States over the last several centuries in search of a more promising
4 future for themselves and their families; and
5 WHEREAS, Irish Americans initially suffered prejudice and
6 discrimination upon first arriving in the United States. As the years
7 went on, Irish Americans became very involved in the community
8 and made numerous contributions in all aspects of American
9 society and culture, especially in California; and
10 WHEREAS, Irish Americans played vital roles in the
11 development of the United States. Nine Irish Americans were
12 signers of the Declaration of Independence, and 19 Presidents of
13 the United States have been of Irish heritage, including John F.
14 Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, and Bill Clinton; and
15 WHEREAS, Many people of Irish descent have contributed to
16 great movements that have helped to shape our country and its
17 role in the world, including Mother Jones, labor activist; Lucy

1 Burns, activist in the Women’s Movement; and Senator George
2 Mitchell, negotiator of the Irish Peace Accord; and

3 WHEREAS, Irish Americans have also played a major role in
4 California politics. Many governors, legislative leaders, city
5 mayors, and other public officials who have shaped the
6 development of California over the years have been of Irish
7 descent; and

8 WHEREAS, Irish Americans were very involved in the
9 development of infrastructure throughout the United States and
10 especially in California. This included work on railroads and
11 bridges that connected the West to the East. The Irish were also
12 instrumental in the building of dams, roads, canals, and buildings
13 that expanded greatly in the late 1800s; and

14 WHEREAS, Many Irish Americans have made their mark in
15 pursuit of public safety and have risked or lost their lives on
16 countless occasions in carrying out their duties; and

17 WHEREAS, Irish Americans have served with distinction in
18 every war that this nation has fought. Many of the outstanding
19 soldiers who fought for American freedom in the Revolutionary
20 War were of Irish descent. Since then, Irish Americans have
21 sacrificed their lives in every other war in which the United States
22 has fought; and

23 WHEREAS, Many Irish Americans have contributed greatly to
24 the United States economy in business, including Henry Ford;
25 Alexander Stewart, the inventor of the American department store;
26 and Cathleen Black, president, Hearst Magazines; and

27 WHEREAS, Irish Americans have contributed to the American
28 literary tradition through great authors including Flannery
29 O’Connor, Eugene O’Neill, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Mary McCarthy,
30 Tom Clancy, and Frank McCourt; and

31 WHEREAS, Irish Americans have contributed to American
32 entertainment with such stars as actors Jack Nicholson, John
33 Wayne, and George Clooney; actor and comedian Bill Murray;
34 actress Grace Kelly; actress and comedian Rosie O’Donnell; actor
35 and singer Bing Crosby; actress and singer Rosemary Clooney;
36 and actor and director Edward Burns being of Irish heritage; and

37 WHEREAS, Today, over 44 million Americans claim Irish
38 heritage, and they continue to contribute to the American and
39 Californian political, economical, and cultural landscape; now,
40 therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
2 *thereof concurring,* That the Legislature, in honor of the multitude
3 of contributions that Irish Americans have made to make this a
4 better country and state for all people, designates March 2009 to
5 be Irish American Heritage Month in California and calls upon
6 the people of the state to observe the month of March with
7 appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities, especially on
8 March 17, since everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day; and be it
9 further
10 *Resolved,* That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
11 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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