

House Resolution

No. 18

Introduced by Assembly Member Hagman

June 23, 2011

House Resolution No. 18—Relative to the 4th of July.

1 WHEREAS, July 4, 2011, marks the 235th anniversary of the
2 signing of the Declaration of Independence, and by the adoption
3 of that document — formally entitled, “The unanimous Declaration
4 of the thirteen United States of America” — the nation we today
5 know as the United States of America officially came into being,
6 an occasion forever memorialized by Abraham Lincoln in the
7 words of his Gettysburg Address as when “... our fathers brought
8 forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and
9 dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal”; and

10 WHEREAS, On June 7, 1776, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,
11 at a location today known as Independence Hall, Virginia delegate
12 Richard Henry Lee brought the following resolution before the
13 Second Continental Congress of the United Colonies: “Resolved,
14 That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and
15 independent states, that they are absolved from all allegiance to
16 the British Crown, and that all political connection between them
17 and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved
18”; and

19 WHEREAS, On June 8, 1776, Lee’s resolution was referred to
20 a committee of the whole of the Continental Congress, at which
21 time they spent most of that day as well as June 10 debating
22 independence; and

23 WHEREAS, On June 11, 1776, a “Committee of Five” — with
24 Thomas Jefferson of Virginia being picked unanimously as its first

1 member, and also including John Adams of Massachusetts,
2 Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, Robert R. Livingston of New
3 York, and Roger Sherman of Connecticut — was charged with
4 drafting a declaration of independence for consideration by the
5 Continental Congress; and

6 WHEREAS, The members of the “Committee of Five” assigned
7 Jefferson the task of producing a draft declaration, and on June
8 28, 1776, he produced a draft that, with minor changes by the
9 committee members, was forwarded to the Congress for its further
10 consideration; and

11 WHEREAS, On July 2, 1776, the Second Continental Congress
12 adopted the Lee resolution upon the affirmative vote of 12 of the
13 13 colonial delegations, an occasion that delegate and future
14 President John Adams detailed to his wife Abigail in a letter written
15 July 3, 1776, as follows: “Yesterday the greatest Question was
16 decided, which ever was debated in America, and a greater perhaps,
17 never was or will be decided among Men”; and

18 WHEREAS, On July 4, 1776, after further debate and changes
19 to the committee document, the Continental Congress adopted the
20 Declaration of Independence establishing the United States of
21 America, to which John Hancock that day affixed his signature,
22 with 55 other delegates representing the 13 colonies — now states
23 of the newly created nation — signing the declaration within the
24 next several weeks; and

25 WHEREAS, July 4 is a day unlike any other — in the history
26 of the United States of America, and indeed, the world — in that
27 not only is it the day that an infant nation formally defied the most
28 powerful empire on earth in a quest for freedom, liberty, and
29 independence, but even more importantly because on that day this
30 new nation declared as a “self-evident truth” — known and
31 knowable to all persons at all times in all places throughout the
32 world — the radical notion that “all men are created equal ...
33 endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that
34 among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”; and

35 WHEREAS, Since its adoption and bold pronouncement more
36 than two centuries ago, the Declaration of Independence and the
37 principles which animate that timeless document have inspired
38 literally billions of persons around the world to pursue freedom in
39 their own nation, for themselves and their own loved ones, and for
40 their fellow men and women, and remain today an imperfectly

1 unrealized goal to which all Americans and all who cherish liberty
2 must rededicate themselves, just as the drafters and signers of the
3 Declaration of Independence did by declaring: “with a firm reliance
4 on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge[d] to
5 each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor”; and

6 WHEREAS, On this and every July Fourth, it is both proper
7 and fitting that the institutions of California government, and
8 indeed all Californians, express heartfelt gratitude and indebtedness
9 to those men and women who have served in the Armed Forces
10 of the United States, and in particular to those who have suffered
11 the injuries of battle and who have made the ultimate sacrifice in
12 protecting freedom and liberty around the world, recalling the
13 words of President Abraham Lincoln that, as a result of their
14 profound sacrifice, “... this nation, under God, shall have a new
15 birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the
16 people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth”; now,
17 therefore, be it

18 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California*, That the
19 Assembly of the State of California does — and intends to every
20 year immediately preceding the 4th of July — take this opportunity
21 to recognize and celebrate July 4, 2011, and the 235th anniversary
22 of the birth of our great nation and the signing of the Declaration
23 of Independence that this day represents; and be it further

24 *Resolved*, That the Assembly of the State of California calls
25 upon all the people of the great State of California, and the United
26 States of America, to take the opportunity of the 4th of July holiday
27 to obtain a greater knowledge and understanding of the facts and
28 circumstances that compelled the 13 original colonies to declare
29 their independence, and of the timeless principles of liberty,
30 equality, and self-determination that rest at the heart of the
31 Declaration of Independence; and be it further

32 *Resolved*, That the Assembly of the State of California, on behalf
33 of a grateful citizenry, hereby expresses its heartfelt thanks,
34 appreciation, and prayers to all who have served — and who
35 currently serve — in the Armed Forces of the United States, in
36 recognition of the countless sacrifices and the indispensable role
37 these brave men and women have played even before the founding
38 of our nation on July 4, 1776, in preserving, protecting, and
39 defending the freedoms and liberties of all Americans, and
40 expanding freedom throughout the world; and be it further

- 1 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly shall make
- 2 available suitable copies of this resolution for distribution by
- 3 Members of the Assembly of the State of California.

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