

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 27, 2012

Senate Concurrent Resolution

No. 55

Introduced by Senator Liu

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Atkins)

August 17, 2011

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 55—Relative to California Runaway and Homeless Youth ~~Month~~ *Months*.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 55, as amended, Liu. California Runaway and Homeless Youth Month.

This measure would designate *the months of November 2011 and November 2012* as California Runaway and Homeless Youth ~~Month~~ *Months*, and would recognize the need for individuals, schools, communities, businesses, local governments, and the state to take action on behalf of runaway and homeless youth in California.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Runaway and homeless youth are young people
2 between 12 and 24 years of age who have the least access to
3 essential opportunities and supports; and
4 WHEREAS, The prevalence of runaway and homelessness
5 among youth is staggering, with studies nationally suggesting that
6 between 1.6 and 2.8 million youth live on the street for at least
7 one night in a one-year period; and
8 WHEREAS, An estimated 200,000 youth under 18 years of age,
9 and thousands more who are 18 to 24 years of age, experience
10 homelessness each year in California; and

1 WHEREAS, An overwhelming majority of runaway and
2 homeless youth have been expelled from their homes by their
3 families; physically, sexually, and emotionally abused at home;
4 discharged from foster care and other state custodial systems
5 without adequate transition plans; separated from their parents by
6 death or divorce; too poor to secure their own basic needs; and
7 ineligible or unable to access adequate medical or mental health
8 resources; and

9 WHEREAS, Runaway and homeless youth who live on the
10 street are victims of physical abuse, sexual exploitation, and crime
11 in untold numbers; and

12 WHEREAS, These youths are on the street because they feel
13 there are no other options open to them; and

14 WHEREAS, Youths who “age out” of the foster care system
15 are at an increased risk of homelessness, and represent an estimated
16 25 to 40 percent of the youth who are currently homeless; and

17 WHEREAS, Providing safe, stable, and permanent housing for
18 runaway and homeless youth is a family, community, state, and
19 national priority; and

20 WHEREAS, The future well-being of our state depends on the
21 value we place on our youth, and, in particular, on our actions to
22 provide the most vulnerable young people in the state with
23 opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities they
24 need to find and maintain stable housing and develop into healthy
25 and productive adults; and

26 WHEREAS, The number of effective programs providing
27 services and support to runaway and homeless youth in California
28 is a fraction of what is needed to fully address the needs of these
29 young people; and

30 WHEREAS, The California Coalition for Youth has operated
31 the California Youth Crisis Line (1-800-843-5200), 24 hours a
32 day, seven days a week, for over 24 years as the state’s only
33 emergency response system for youth in crisis; and

34 WHEREAS, November is National Runaway and Homeless
35 Youth Awareness Month; and

36 WHEREAS, The California Coalition for Youth, along with
37 other community-based organizations, providers, and advocates,
38 are sponsoring ~~California’s~~ *the* second annual *California* Runaway
39 and Homeless Youth Month to increase awareness and action on

1 behalf of youth who are at risk or currently living on the street;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Awareness of the tragedy of youth homelessness
4 and its causes must be heightened to ensure greater support for
5 effective programs aimed at preventing homelessness and helping
6 youth remain off the streets; now, therefore, be it

7 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
8 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature recognizes the need for
9 individuals, schools, communities, businesses, local governments,
10 and the state to take action on behalf of runaway and homeless
11 youth in California; and be it further

12 *Resolved*, That the Legislature hereby designates the ~~month~~
13 *months* of November 2011 *and November 2012* as California
14 Runaway and Homeless Youth ~~Month~~ *Months*.