

Introduced by Senator Corbett
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Garrick)

February 13, 2012

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 64—Relative to Irish American Heritage Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 64, as introduced, Corbett. Irish American Heritage Month.

This measure would designate March 2012 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 20 Presidents of
13 the United States have been of Irish heritage, including John F.
14 Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama; and
15 WHEREAS, Many people of Irish descent have contributed to
16 great movements that have helped to shape our country and its

1 role in the world, including Mother Jones, labor activist; Lucy
2 Burns, activist in the Women’s Movement; and Senator George
3 Mitchell, negotiator of the Irish Peace Accord; and

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

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

15 WHEREAS, Many Irish Americans have made their mark as
16 peace officers and firefighters, and have risked or lost their lives
17 on countless occasions in carrying out their duties; and

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

23 WHEREAS, Many Irish Americans have contributed greatly to
24 the United States economy in business, including: Henry Ford,
25 founder of the Ford Motor Company; Alexander Stewart, the
26 inventor of the American department store; Cathleen Black,
27 president of Hearst Publishing; Jack Welch, former president and
28 chief executive officer of General Electric; and Herb Kelleher,
29 cofounder of Southwest Airlines; and

30 WHEREAS, Irish Americans have contributed to the field of
31 science, including astronaut Michael Collins, first female
32 commander of a Space Shuttle Eileen Collins, physicist and Nobel
33 Laureate Charles Townes, and bioengineer and MacArthur Genius
34 recipient James Collins; and

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

39 WHEREAS, Irish Americans have contributed to American
40 entertainment with such stars as actors Jack Nicholson, John

1 Wayne, and George Clooney; actor and comedian Bill Murray;
2 actress Grace Kelly; actress and comedian Rosie O'Donnell; actor
3 and singer Bing Crosby; actress and singer Rosemary Clooney;
4 actress and singer Judy Garland, comedian Conan O'Brien, and
5 actor and director Edward Burns being of Irish heritage; and

6 WHEREAS, Today, over 44 million Americans claim Irish
7 heritage, and they continue to contribute to the American and
8 California politics, economy, and culture; now, therefore, be it

9 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
10 *thereof concurring*, That the Senate, in honor of the multitude of
11 contributions that Irish Americans have made to make this a better
12 country and state for all people, designates March 2012 to be Irish
13 American Heritage Month in California, and calls upon the people
14 of the state to observe the month of March with appropriate
15 ceremonies, programs, and activities, especially on March 17,
16 since everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day; and be it further

17 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
18 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.