
Introduced by Senator Mitchell

January 6, 2014

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 73—Relative to Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 73, as introduced, Mitchell. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

This measure would designate that January 20, 2014, be observed as the official memorial of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birth and commemorate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement in changing public policy in California and in the United States of America. This measure would also recognize the anniversaries of the Emancipation Proclamation and the March on Washington in connection with the advancement of civil rights.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, One hundred years after the Emancipation
- 2 Proclamation, on August 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- 3 and others organized hundreds of thousands of blacks and whites,
- 4 Jews and gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, in a march to the
- 5 Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. where Dr. King made his
- 6 famous “I Have a Dream” speech announcing that the days of
- 7 segregation in the United States were numbered; and
- 8 WHEREAS, Monday, January 20, 2014, marks the 28th National
- 9 Celebration of the National Holiday for Dr. Martin Luther King,
- 10 Jr. and his fight for civil and human rights; and
- 11 WHEREAS, On Wednesday, January 15, 2014, Dr. Martin
- 12 Luther King, Jr. would have been 85 years of age; and

1 WHEREAS, On April 10, 1970, California became the first
2 state to pass legislation making Dr. King’s birthday a school
3 holiday and, subsequently, a statewide holiday; and

4 WHEREAS, Representative John Conyers (D-Michigan)
5 submitted the first legislation for a national Martin Luther King,
6 Jr. Holiday, which was signed into law by President Ronald Wilson
7 Reagan, on November 2, 1983; and

8 WHEREAS, January 20, 1986, marked the first observance of
9 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; and

10 WHEREAS, Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement helped
11 change public policy from segregation to integration, resulting in
12 the repeal of the post-Reconstruction era state laws mandating
13 racial segregation in the South known as the “Jim Crow Laws,”
14 thereby leading to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the
15 Voting Rights Act of 1965, and other antidiscrimination laws aimed
16 at ending economic, legal, and social segregation in America; and

17 WHEREAS, Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement helped
18 change public policy from legal and socially acceptable
19 discrimination and segregation to an open and accessible policy
20 of racial integration leading to equal participation and access to
21 primary and higher education, housing, employment, transportation,
22 federal, state, and local governmental elections, and other aspects
23 of public policy relating to human rights; and

24 WHEREAS, These public policy changes at the national level
25 influenced many changes in California that culminated in the
26 passage of the Unruh Civil Rights Act and the Rumford Fair
27 Housing Act, in open enrollment and access to higher education
28 specifically with respect to the California State University and the
29 University of California, and in employment and labor laws,
30 transportation policy, election laws, and other aspects of public
31 policy; and

32 WHEREAS, The unfinished business of Dr. King and the Civil
33 Rights Movement was and is the plight of the poor, the fight against
34 war and for worldwide peace, and the struggle for a fair, equitable,
35 and sensible economic system; and

36 WHEREAS, Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement noted
37 that a majority of Americans lived below the poverty line, and that
38 the huge income gaps between rich and poor called for “changes
39 in the structure of our society”; and

1 WHEREAS, Dr. King, in the last months of his life, began
2 organizing a Poor People’s Campaign to, among other things,
3 assemble “a multiracial army of the poor that would descend on
4 Washington—engaging in nonviolent civil disobedience at the
5 Capitol, if need be—until Congress enacted a poor people’s bill
6 of rights”; and

7 WHEREAS, All of the aforementioned concerns and more
8 continue to be the quest of civil and human rights organizations
9 in the great State of California, across America, and throughout
10 the world; and

11 WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. fought to change public
12 policy from the “self-inflicted wound of segregation to the
13 pluralistic diverse democracy” we continue to construct today; and

14 WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights
15 Movement serve as a model for principled leadership and
16 forward-thinking, bipartisan public policy; now, therefore, be it

17 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
18 *thereof concurring*, That Monday, January 20, 2014, be observed
19 as the official memorial of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birth and
20 his work in the Civil Rights Movement; and be it further

21 *Resolved*, That this day, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the
22 Civil Rights Movement be commemorated for their help in
23 changing public policy from segregation to integration, for the
24 betterment of this, the great State of California and these United
25 States of America; and be it further

26 *Resolved*, That the California Legislature encourages all
27 Americans to pay tribute to the life and works of Dr. Martin Luther
28 King, Jr. through participation in community service projects on
29 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; and be it further

30 *Resolved*, That the California Legislature recognizes the inherent
31 value of community service and volunteerism in the creation of a
32 civil society and as a means of nonviolent community progress
33 consistent with the works of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and be
34 it further

35 *Resolved*, That the California Legislature recognizes the benefits
36 of the collaborative work by many organizations that promote,
37 facilitate, and carry out needed service projects nationwide; and
38 be it further

1 *Resolved*, That the California Legislature encourages its
2 members and colleagues to urge their constituents to participate
3 in community service projects; and be it further

4 *Resolved*, That the California Legislature acknowledges that,
5 by serving one's country, one's community, and one's neighbor,
6 our nation makes progress in civility, equality, and unity consistent
7 with the values and life's work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and
8 be it further

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