

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 62

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 81

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 62—Relative to Read Across California Month.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 6, 2011.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 62, Brownley. Read Across California Month.

This measure would proclaim the month of March of every year as Read Across California Month and request that public and private stakeholders work together to raise awareness of the importance of reading to young children and the importance of independent reading among our pupils and citizens of California by encouraging everyone to read for 30 minutes for 30 days during the month of March of every year, in conjunction with the Read Across America campaign held annually on March 2.

WHEREAS, Reading is a fundamental skill that is the cornerstone of a life of academic success as well as a fulfilling adult life. The ability to learn about new subjects, to find necessary information on issues ranging from health problems and consumer protection, and to pursue academic research in science and the arts, depends upon the ability to read; and

WHEREAS, The frequency and regularity of reading independently has a direct correlation to the level of reading skills. The more a person reads, the better they become at reading; and

WHEREAS, Reading out loud to children increases their interest in mastering reading and exposes children to proper vocabulary, grammar, and phrasing, and enhances the development of their own reading skills; and

WHEREAS, According to the Nation's Report Card, in California, 54 percent of grade 4 pupils and 64 percent of grade 8 pupils tested in early 2009 scored at or above the basic reading level, a measure indicating a partial mastery of grade-level content. Comparatively, this is below national estimates suggesting 66 percent of all grade 4 pupils and 74 percent of all grade 8 pupils scored at basic or above levels; and

WHEREAS, The 2010 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program for the California Standards Tests reported that only 52 percent of pupils grades 2 to 11, inclusive, were proficient in English-Language Arts; and

WHEREAS, The Public Policy Institute of California's report, "Lessons in Reading Reform: Finding What Works" (2010), highlights the fact that struggling elementary and middle school pupils who are given extra time for reading can make sizable gains in literacy; and

WHEREAS, The State Department of Education states that reading is important, both inside and outside of the school environment. Reading and literacy skills provide pupils with the keys to lifelong learning. The more pupils read, the better readers they will become. Every effort should be made both at school and at home to get pupils to do as much reading as possible; and

WHEREAS, According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 1994 Reading Assessment, 87 percent of pupils who reported reading for fun on their own time once a month or more performed at the proficient level, while 13 percent of pupils who reported never or hardly ever reading for fun performed at the basic level; and

WHEREAS, The American Academy of Pediatrics now recognizes the importance of early reading experiences and recommends daily reading to children from at least six months of age; and

WHEREAS, A United States Department of Education analysis found that children who were read to at least three times a week by a family member were almost twice as likely to score in the top 25 percent in reading than children who were read to less than three times a week; and

WHEREAS, Studies on emergent literacy have shown that children who are read to from an early age are more successful at learning to read; and

WHEREAS, In conjunction with the Read Across America campaign held annually on March 2, this measure would establish the Read Across California reading initiative, which would encourage the citizens of California to read for 30 minutes for 30 days during the month of March; and

WHEREAS, Private and public sector organizations and agencies, as well as private and public citizens, may participate in this reading initiative to let our pupils know that their academic success and reading ability is important to the economy, stability, and prosperity of the State of California; and

WHEREAS, Participants from the public and private sectors may participate in reading to children in the public schools, private schools, libraries, or other appropriate community facilities; and

WHEREAS, This public awareness campaign would be implemented through private and public partnerships and not seek state funding at this time; and

WHEREAS, The Read Across California initiative will foster a love of reading and encourage our young people and all citizens of our state to explore the many exciting wonders of the world through books; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature proclaims the month of March of every year as Read Across California Month; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature requests stakeholders, both public and private, to work together to raise awareness of the importance of reading to young children and the importance of independent reading among our pupils and citizens of California by encouraging everyone to read for 30 minutes

for 30 days during the month of March of every year, in conjunction with the Read Across America campaign held annually on March 2; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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