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ACR-18 Parks Make Life Better! Month. (2015-2016)

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 18

CHAPTER 74

Relative to "Parks Make Life Better!" Month.

[Filed with Secretary of State June 26, 2015.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 18, Gordon. Parks Make Life Better! Month.

This measure would recognize the importance of access to local parks, trails, open space, and facilities for the health and development of all Californians and would declare the month of July 2015 as "Parks Make Life Better!" Month.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, A 2009 public opinion research study, conducted by the California Park and Recreation Society, revealed that 98 percent of California's households visit a local park and 50 percent of California households participate in an organized recreation program annually; and

WHEREAS, California's residents value their local parks and recreation services, as they provide access to the serenity and inspiration of nature, outdoor spaces, and places for play and exercise; facilities for directed and self-directed recreation; activities that facilitate social connections, human development, the arts, and lifelong learning; and positive alternatives for youth that help lower crime; and

WHEREAS, The Outdoor Industry Association reports that outdoor recreation, both passive and active, generates more than eighty-five billion dollars (\$85,000,000,000) in economic activity in California, supporting nearly 800,000 jobs and representing a business and economic sector that surpasses the aerospace and insurance industries in the state; and

WHEREAS, The 2010 California Obesity Prevention Plan states the following:

(a) One in every nine California children, one in three teens, and over 50 percent of adults are already overweight or obese, and obesity affects virtually all age, income, educational, ethnic, and disability groups.

(b) Research has shown that where people live, work, and play impacts obesity. For example, in Imperial County, 73 percent of adults are overweight or obese, while only 43 percent of San Francisco City and County adults are overweight or obese.

(c) California's costs attributable to physical inactivity, obesity, and excess body weight in 2006 were estimated at forty-one billion two hundred million dollars (\$41,200,000,000). In contrast, a 5-percent improvement in each of these risk factors could result in an annual savings of nearly two billion four hundred million dollars (\$2,400,000,000).

(d) To address obesity, the state must ensure that all California residents have access to safe places to play and be active; and

WHEREAS, California's 10 Step Vision for a Healthy California is a call to action to transform the state so that all Californians can enjoy healthy eating and active living, resulting in all of the following:

(a) Every day, every child will participate in physical activity.

(b) California's adults will be physically active every day.

(c) Neighborhoods, communities, and buildings will support physical activity, including safe walking, stair climbing, and bicycling; and

WHEREAS, The Governor, Legislature, and citizens have prioritized efforts to increase physical activity, access to nature, spaces for play and exercise, the arts, lifelong learning, and social connections among children and adults through the approval of statewide park bond programs; and

WHEREAS, The California Park & Recreation Society promotes the positive personal and community benefits of parks, open space, trails, recreation facilities and programs, nature education, and sports for able and disabled children, teens, adults, and seniors; and

WHEREAS, Participation in physical activities can lower a citizen's risk of developing chronic health problems, such as high blood pressure, asthma, heart disease, and diabetes, and also help children grow up to be healthier adults; and

WHEREAS, The California Park & Recreation Society has released a statewide public awareness campaign, "Parks Make Life Better!" to inform citizens of the many benefits of utilizing parks, facilities, programs, and services; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature recognizes the importance of access to local parks, trails, open space, and facilities such as swimming pools, skate parks, dog parks, tennis courts, nature centers, and museums, for the health and development of all Californians; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature declares the month of July 2015 as "Parks Make Life Better!" Month; and be it further

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