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ACR-51 West Nile Virus and Mosquito and Vector Control Awareness Week. (2015-2016)

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 51

CHAPTER 45

Relative to West Nile Virus and Mosquito and Vector Control Awareness Week.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 51, Wood. West Nile Virus and Mosquito and Vector Control Awareness Week.

This measure would declare the week of April 19, 2015, through April 25, 2015, as West Nile Virus and Mosquito and Vector Control Awareness Week.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, West Nile virus is a mosquito-borne disease that can result in debilitating cases of meningitis and encephalitis and death to humans, horses, avian species, and other wildlife; and

WHEREAS, In 2014, West Nile virus resulted in 29 human deaths in California, a 93 percent increase over 2013, and 798 individual cases in 31 counties, nearly doubling the number of cases during 2013, of which 543 developed neuroinvasive disease; and

WHEREAS, The State Department of Public Health and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention predict West Nile virus will again pose a public health threat in California in 2015; and

WHEREAS, Adequately funded mosquito and vector control, disease surveillance, and public awareness programs, coupled with best management practices on public and private lands, are the best ways to prevent outbreaks of West Nile virus and other diseases borne by mosquitoes and other vectors; and

WHEREAS, Mosquitoes and other vectors, including, but not limited to, ticks, Africanized honeybees, rats, fleas, and flies, continue to be a source of human suffering, illness, and death, and a public nuisance in California and around the world; and

WHEREAS, Excess numbers of mosquitoes and other vectors spread diseases, reduce enjoyment of both public and private outdoor living spaces, reduce property values, hinder outdoor work, reduce livestock productivity, and have a negative impact on the environment; and

WHEREAS, As a result of the threat mosquitos posed to California's economic development and the health of its citizens, the Legislature enacted, in 1915, 100 years ago, the Mosquito Abatement Districts Act; and

WHEREAS, Professional mosquito and vector control based on scientific research has made great advances in safely reducing mosquito and vector populations and the diseases they transmit; and

WHEREAS, Established mosquito- and vector-borne diseases, such as plague, Lyme disease, flea-borne typhus, and encephalitis, and new and emerging vector-borne diseases, such as hantavirus, arenavirus, babesiosis, and ehrlichiosis, cause illness and sometimes death every year in California; and

WHEREAS, Two invasive mosquito species in California, *Aedes albopictus*, the Asian tiger mosquito, which was detected in southern California in 2011, and *Aedes aegypti*, the yellow fever mosquito, which was detected in central and northern California in 2013, and in southern California in 2014, are posing new public health threats due to their capability to transmit potentially deadly or debilitating diseases, such as dengue, yellow fever, and chikungunya, diseases that are not currently transmitted in California, as well as other encephalitis-causing viruses; and

WHEREAS, Mosquito and vector control districts throughout the State of California work closely with the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the State Department of Public Health to reduce pesticide risks to humans, animals, and the environment while protecting human health from mosquito- and vector-borne diseases and nuisance attacks; and

WHEREAS, Best management practices, emphasizing nonchemical approaches, have been developed to guide mosquito control that can significantly reduce mosquito populations for new development and on state and private lands; and

WHEREAS, The State Department of Public Health maintains information on how to eliminate risks from vectors at both www.cdph.ca.gov and www.westnile.ca.gov, which the public is encouraged to review; and

WHEREAS, The public's awareness of the health benefits associated with safe, professionally applied mosquito and vector control methods will support these efforts, as well as motivate the state and the public to eliminate mosquito and vector breeding sites on public and private property; and

WHEREAS, Educational programs have been developed to include schools, civic groups, private industry, and government agencies, in order to meet the public's need for information about West Nile virus, other diseases, and mosquito and vector biology and control; and

WHEREAS, Public awareness can result in reduced production of mosquitoes and other vectors on residential, commercial, and public lands by responsible parties, avoidance of the bites of mosquitoes and other vectors when the risk of West Nile virus and other disease transmission is high, detection of human cases of mosquito- and vector-borne diseases that may otherwise be misdiagnosed for lack of appropriate laboratory testing, and the formation of mosquito or vector control agencies where needed; and

WHEREAS, Public awareness can result in action to provide adequate funding for existing mosquito and vector control agencies or to create control agencies in areas where there are no existing controls; and

WHEREAS, West Nile Virus and Mosquito and Vector Control Awareness Week will increase the public's awareness of the threat of West Nile virus and other diseases and the activities of the various mosquito and vector research and control agencies working to minimize the health threat within California, and will highlight the educational programs currently available; and

WHEREAS, The Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California has designated the week of April 19 to April 25, 2015, inclusive, as West Nile Virus and Mosquito and Vector Control Awareness Week in the State of California; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby declares that the week of April 19 to April 25, 2015, inclusive, be designated as West Nile Virus and Mosquito and Vector Control Awareness Week; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit a copy of this resolution to the Governor, the State Public Health Officer, and the author for appropriate distribution.