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**ACR-188 PTS Awareness Month.** (2015-2016)

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**Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 188**

**CHAPTER 129**

Relative to PTS Awareness Month.

[ Filed with Secretary of State August 16, 2016. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

ACR 188, Melendez. PTS Awareness Month.

This measure would proclaim the month of June 2016 as PTS Awareness Month.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, Throughout our nation's history, the men and women from the State of California have served in the United States Armed Forces to preserve our freedom, protect our security, and uphold our democratic values; from the battles of the Civil War, through the crucible of two world wars, through adversity in the Vietnam War and to the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, our men and women in uniform have stood proudly in defense of the United States, the State of California, and the cause of liberty; and

WHEREAS, Brave individuals who proudly serve in the Armed Forces risk their lives for the freedom of every American and deserve every possible resource to ensure their lasting physical, mental, and emotional health; and

WHEREAS, More than 2,000,000 individuals who proudly serve in the Armed Forces have deployed overseas since September 11, 2001, and have served in countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq; and

WHEREAS, The Armed Forces has maintained a high operational tempo since September 11, 2001, with many members of the Armed Forces deploying overseas numerous times; and

WHEREAS, According to the California State Library, California has approximately 1.9 million veterans. Most live in southern California counties and are heavily clustered in Los Angeles County (323,431 in 2012), San Diego County (222,348 in 2012), and Orange County (132,529 in 2012); and

WHEREAS, According to the California State Library, approximately 26 percent of veterans report having a disability, and 32 percent indicate that their disability had interfered with them getting or holding a job; and

WHEREAS, Veterans of the Armed Forces and veterans who served after September 11, 2001, remain at high risk of post-traumatic stress (PTS); and

WHEREAS, PTS considerably increases the risk of anxiety, depression, drug- and alcohol-related disorders, and suicide, especially if left untreated; and

WHEREAS, Many cases of PTS remain undiagnosed and unreported due to a lack of awareness and education on PTS; and

WHEREAS, According to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, 20 percent of veterans who served in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom have PTS in a given year, and 12 percent of Gulf War Veterans have PTS in a given year; and

WHEREAS, Although the United States Department of Defense and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs have made significant advances in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of PTS, many challenges remain; and

WHEREAS, The United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense must continue to work to educate service members, veterans, the families of service members and veterans, and the public about the causes, symptoms, and treatment of PTS; and

WHEREAS, It is important to all citizens of the State of California that those who served our country in the military are aware of the symptoms of PTS and are able to seek and receive help; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature supports our current and former service members who are suffering from PTS by bringing awareness to all Californians and proclaims the month of June 2016 as PTS Awareness Month in the state; and be it further

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