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SCR-39 Jewish American Heritage Month. (2015-2016)

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 39

CHAPTER 71

Relative to Jewish American Heritage Month.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 39, Block. Jewish American Heritage Month.

This measure would state that the Legislature recognizes May 2015 as Jewish American Heritage Month, encourages all Californians to participate in appropriate observances with activities that celebrate and commemorate Jewish American Heritage Month, and commends Jewish Americans for their notable accomplishments and outstanding service to the state and the nation.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, For thousands of years, the Jewish people have sustained their identity and traditions while persevering in the face of persecution, enslavement, years of wandering, forced segregation, and the horrors of the Holocaust; and

WHEREAS, Ever since the first Dutch Jew set foot in New Amsterdam in 1654, Jews have been contributing bountifully to the culture and history of the United States of America, have achieved great success, strengthened the country, and helped shape the American way of life through their deep commitment to faith, family, and community; and

WHEREAS, When the first Jewish settlers came to this country, they sought a place of promise where they could practice their faith in freedom and live in liberty; and

WHEREAS, In his second year in office, President George Washington wrote a letter to the Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island, which was one of the first Jewish houses of worship in the United States of America, reaffirming the nation's commitment to religious freedom where he noted that the government of the United States would give "to bigotry no sanction [and] to persecution no assistance," and that all Americans are entitled to "liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship"; and

WHEREAS, It was such a belief that drew generations of Jewish immigrants to the United States of America to rebuild their lives, whether it was Jewish families fleeing pogroms or persecution in Europe during the last century, Holocaust survivors, or Jews trapped behind the Iron Curtain; and

WHEREAS, This history led many Jewish Americans to find common cause with the Civil Rights Movement, as African Americans and Jewish Americans marched side by side in Selma and Montgomery, boarded buses for Freedom Rides together, and united in their support of liberty and human dignity; and

WHEREAS, Jewish Americans have continued their strong support for ending discrimination in voting, employment, public accommodation, and in society at large, by prominently participating in virtually every civil rights effort in the American

experience, including those for women, farmworkers, the disabled, and for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans; and

WHEREAS, As a nation of immigrants, the United States is better and stronger because Jewish people from all over the world have chosen to become American citizens; and

WHEREAS, Jewish American Heritage Month is the time when the rich history of Jewish Americans is celebrated and their contributions to this nation are honored; and

WHEREAS, Anyone interested in learning more about the heritage and contributions of Jewish Americans should visit www.JewishHeritageMonth.gov; and

WHEREAS, Jewish American Heritage Month is also an opportunity to remember and thank the many Jewish Americans who defend this nation's ideals as members of the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, Jewish American Heritage Month is also a time to renew this nation's unbreakable bond with the nation of Israel. This bond is a partnership built on mutual interests and shared ideals that transcend politics. Israel and the United States of America are enriched by diversity and faith, fueled by innovation, and ruled not only by men and women, but also by laws; and

WHEREAS, Jewish Americans continue to guide the nation's progress as scientists, teachers, entrepreneurs, public servants, private citizens, leaders, and parents; and

WHEREAS, Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz sponsored House Concurrent Resolution 315 (H. Con. Res. 315 (109th)) that urges the President of the United States to issue each year a proclamation calling on state and local governments and the people of the United States to observe American Jewish History Month; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature recognizes May 2015 as Jewish American Heritage Month, encourages all Californians to participate in appropriate observances with activities that celebrate and commemorate Jewish American Heritage Month, and commends Jewish Americans for their notable accomplishments and outstanding service to the state and the nation; and be it further

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