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SJR-16 AmeriCorps. (2015-2016)

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Senate Joint Resolution No. 16

CHAPTER 165

Relative to AmeriCorps.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 08, 2015.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 16, De León. AmeriCorps.

This measure would urge the United States Congress to protect and sustain full funding for the Corporation for National and Community Service to ensure the continuation of critically needed services, expand opportunities, and save taxpayer dollars through essential national service programs like AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, More than 27,000 people of all ages and backgrounds are helping to meet local needs, strengthen communities, and increase civic engagement through national service in California; and

WHEREAS, These citizens tutor and mentor children, support veterans and military families, provide health services, restore the environment, respond to disasters, increase economic opportunity, and recruit and manage volunteers at more than 3,200 locations throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) runs three AmeriCorps programs: AmeriCorps, which provides grants to a network of local and national organizations and agencies committed to using national service to address critical community needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment; AmeriCorps VISTA, whose members help bring individuals and communities out of poverty by serving full time to fight illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses, and increase housing opportunities; and AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps), a residential program for people 18-24 years of age that strengthens communities and develops leaders through direct, team-based national and community service; and

WHEREAS, This year, the CNCS committed more than \$108,520,000 to support California communities through national service initiatives, investing in cost-effective community solutions and working hand in hand with local partners to improve lives, expand economic opportunity, and engage citizens in solving problems in their communities; and

WHEREAS, The CNCS provides vital support to schools, food banks, homeless shelters, community health clinics, youth centers, veterans service facilities, and other nonprofit and faith-based organizations at a time of growing demand for services in many of the state's most impoverished communities and, through a unique public-private partnership, leverages an additional \$49,930,000 in other resources to strengthen community impact, build local support, and increase return on taxpayer dollars; and

WHEREAS, This year AmeriCorps is providing more than 7,600 individuals the opportunity to provide intensive, results-driven service to meet the pressing needs in communities across California. Administered primarily through CaliforniaVolunteers, the state office that manages programs and initiatives to increase the number of Californians involved with service and volunteerism, AmeriCorps received \$28 million in grants to 48 programs statewide with a majority of the investment benefiting education-related programs; and

WHEREAS, AmeriCorps helps make higher education more affordable for young Californians who serve and qualify for the Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards, which AmeriCorps alumni can use to pursue higher education or to pay off existing, qualified student loans, thereby enhancing their financial stability and increasing their employability into the future; and

WHEREAS, National service programs are cost effective and represent a smart investment for the nation and for the State of California because, with every dollar invested in national service, there is a return to society of \$3.95 in terms of higher earnings, more output, and other community-wide benefits and every federal dollar invested in national service yields \$2.20 in savings to other government programs; and

WHEREAS, Since 1994, more than 120,000 California residents have served more than 150 million hours and benefited millions of Californians with their selfless dedication and commitment to service; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature recognizes AmeriCorps members, both past and present, who have made the commitment to serve our state and our country and thanks them for their service; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature urges the United States Congress to protect and sustain full funding for the Corporation for National and Community Service to ensure the continuation of critically needed services, expand opportunities, and save taxpayer dollars through essential national service programs like AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States and to the author for appropriate distribution.