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**ACR-183 The 50th anniversary of the Chicano Student Walkouts.** (2017-2018)

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**Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 183**

**CHAPTER 35**

Relative to the 50th anniversary of the Chicano Student Walkouts.

[ Filed with Secretary of State April 13, 2018. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

ACR 183, Carrillo. The 50th anniversary of the Chicano Student Walkouts.

This measure would recognize the month of March as the 50th anniversary of the Chicano Student Walkouts and would encourage all Californians to join in commemorating this historic event.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, Fifty years ago, beginning on March 1, 1968, and continuing in the month of March, more than 15,000 students, most of Mexican origin, walked out of high schools in east Los Angeles in protest of rampant bias and inequalities in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). The protest included thousands of brave Chicano high school students, college students, educators, and community leaders and became known as the Chicano Student Walkouts; and

WHEREAS, The word "Chicano," like Mexican American, came to epitomize those who are Mestizos with heritage of both indigenous Native American culture and European culture, mainly Spanish, through colonization and immigration. Inspired by the courage of the farmworkers and by the California strikes led by César Chávez, many Mexican American youth came to participate in the cause for social betterment that became known as the Chicano movement; and

WHEREAS, Chicano protesters demanded changes to conditions leading to decades of institutionalized racism, creating an environment that perpetuated negative stereotypes that led to high dropout rates, sparse resources, overcrowding, and the reinforcement of low academic expectations; and

WHEREAS, Mexican American (Chicano) students demanded changes from LAUSD for bilingual and bicultural education programs and curriculum in order to incorporate a more complete history of Mexican American contributions and people, and the hiring of more teachers and staff of Mexican descent; and

WHEREAS, At the time, educators forbade Chicano students from speaking Spanish and often steered them toward menial jobs rather than college regardless of their academic abilities. Chicano students were guided into vocational courses instead of academic instruction tracks for college-bound students; and

WHEREAS, During the walkouts, frequently termed "blowouts" by the students, protesters faced harassment and beatings from law enforcement, including arrests for members of the "LA 13" such as Sal Castro, one of the few Latino educators in the City of Los Angeles and a lifelong community and education advocate; and

WHEREAS, Sal Castro was a key figure during the walkouts and was one of the few Mexican American educators in the east Los Angeles schools in the 1960s. He inspired thousands of students to fight against their inferior education, unequal conditions, and the unfair policies they faced; and

WHEREAS, These pupils and community members took a courageous stand that laid the groundwork for crucial educational reforms and inspired future Chicano and Latino movements, including the Chicano civil rights movement and a series of walkouts tied to immigration rights, and even now inspire student-led movements across the country; and

WHEREAS, There have been gains for Latino students across the state stemming from the walkouts, including a 78.5 percent graduation rate for Latinos in 2015, an increase of 15 percent since 2010, and a doubling of completed associate's and bachelor's degrees for Latinos in the last decade; and

WHEREAS, Despite this progress, Latino students still have some of the highest high school dropout rates, limited access to early childhood education, and lower college enrollment rates than their counterparts, which are persistently worrisome trends; and

WHEREAS, Latino students make up the majority of students in California schools, which means they will make up most of our workforce as they age into the workforce; and

WHEREAS, It is critical for our state's economic future that we correct this educational injustice by continuing to build on our hard-won progress, and in doing so, honor the organizing efforts of the community to right these wrongs, including the historic walkouts organized 50 years ago by the students themselves; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby recognizes the month of March as the 50th anniversary of the Chicano Student Walkouts and encourages all Californians to join in commemorating this historic event; and be it further

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