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HR-42 (2017-2018)

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REVISED JULY 17, 2017

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2017–2018 REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE RESOLUTION

NO. 42

Introduced by Assembly Member Steinorth

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Travis Allen, Baker, Cunningham, Dahle, Flora, Fong, Harper, Kiley, Lackey, Maienschein, Mayes, Melendez, Obernolte, Patterson, ~~and Waldron~~ *Waldron, Acosta, Aguiar-Curry, Arambula, Berman, Bigelow, Bloom, Bonta, Brough, Caballero, Calderon, Cervantes, Chau, Chávez, Chen, Chiu, Choi, Chu, Cooper, Dababneh, Daly, Eggman, Friedman, Gallagher, Cristina Garcia, Eduardo Garcia, Gipson, Gloria, Gonzalez Fletcher, Grayson, Holden, Jones-Sawyer, Kalra, Levine, Mathis, McCarty, Medina, Mullin, Muratsuchi, Nazarian, O'Donnell, Rendon, Reyes, Rubio, Salas, Santiago, Mark Stone, Thurmond, Voepel, Weber, and Wood*)

June 01, 2017

Relative to Megan's Law Awareness Week.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

HR 42, as introduced, Steinorth.

WHEREAS, The State of California currently places a high priority on maintaining public safety through a highly skilled and trained law enforcement as well as laws that deter and punish criminal behavior; and

WHEREAS, According to the United States Department of Justice's Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART), offenders released from prison are arrested at rates 30 to 45 times higher than the general population, and despite demonstrated research that many sex offenses are never reported to authorities, researchers agree that observed recidivism rates are underestimates of the true reoffense rates of sex offenders, and the observed sexual recidivism rates of sex offenders range from approximately 5 percent after three years to approximately 24 percent after 15 years; and

WHEREAS, California's Megan's Law was enacted in 1996, requiring the Department of Justice to notify the public about specified registered sex offenders; and

WHEREAS, Megan's Law is named after seven-year-old Megan Kanka from New Jersey, who was tragically raped and murdered on July 29, 1994, by a recidivous child molester who unknowingly moved across the street from Megan's childhood home; and

WHEREAS, The Kanka family became devoted to raising national awareness by warning communities about registered sex offenders living in the local neighborhoods, leading to President Bill Clinton signing legislation in 1996 requiring all states to notify communities when a sex offender moves in; and

WHEREAS, California has been a leader in protecting its citizens from sex offenders, being the first state to pass a statute to comply with the federal Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act and the second state to pass a Megan's Law, and now all states in the nation currently have some form of Megan's Law; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 488 from 2004 greatly improved public transparency surrounding Megan's Law by making information about registered sex offenders, including their names, aliases, photographs, criminal histories, and the address at which the person resides, available to the public through the Department of Justice Internet Web site, to be updated on an ongoing basis; and

WHEREAS, As of 2017, the Department of Justice currently possesses information on the whereabouts of more than 75,000 registered sex offenders living in communities throughout the State of California, not including registrants currently incarcerated or deported; and

WHEREAS, Californians have a right to know about the presence of sex offenders in their communities, near their schools, and around their children; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, That the week of July 23, 2017, to July 29, 2017, inclusive, is proclaimed Megan's Law Awareness Week, and that efforts to increase awareness about all public safety issues and the availability of the California Megan's Law Internet Web site are encouraged and promoted; and be it further

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

REVISIONS:

Heading—Line 4.
