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SCR-135 Portugal Day. (2017-2018)

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 135

CHAPTER 133

Relative to Portugal Day.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 15, 2018.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 135, Cannella. Portugal Day.

This measure would declare June 10, 2018, as Portugal Day to celebrate Portuguese national heritage.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, In September 1542, Portuguese explorer João Rodrigues Cabrillo sailed a ship into San Diego Bay, becoming the first European to explore the land now known as California. Cabrillo's efforts included exploring the California coast, and he is credited with numerous coastal discoveries; and

WHEREAS, Portuguese immigrants began arriving in the United States in relatively large numbers beginning in 1870, with most of these immigrants being men from the Azores, who, for the most part, had been recruited to farm and to work on American whaling ships; and

WHEREAS, Between 1900 and 1940, as much as one-half of the Portuguese community in California owned or operated a dairy farm, worked on a dairy farm, or worked in a dairy-supporting industry. Applying the Portuguese belief in hard work and thriftiness, these pioneering Portuguese Americans were renowned for their work ethic and ingenuity, often reinvesting in their own businesses by buying more land and dairy cows; and

WHEREAS, Among the great Portuguese Americans who have contributed significantly to this country are: composer John Philip Sousa, best known for composing "The Stars and Stripes Forever"; poet Emma Lazarus, best known for her sonnet about the Statue of Liberty, "The New Colossus"; architect William L. Pereira, best known for designing the Transamerica Pyramid in San Francisco; and singer and actress Carmen Miranda. Many Portuguese Americans have also served with distinction in local, state, and federal office; and

WHEREAS, Portuguese Americans have made valuable and substantial contributions to every facet of California life, such as within the thriving agricultural communities of the Santa Clara and San Joaquin Valleys and through service in local, state, and federal office. Today over 350,000 Portuguese Americans reside in California; and

WHEREAS, Portuguese national literary icon Luís Vaz de Camões wrote Portugal's national epic poem, Os Lusíadas, celebrating the 15th-century Portuguese explorations that brought fame and fortune to the country. The poem, considered one of the finest and most important works in Portuguese literature, became a symbol for the great feats of the Portuguese Empire; and

WHEREAS, Dia de Portugal, de Camões e das Comunidades Portuguesas, translated as “Day of Portugal, Camões, and the Portuguese Communities,” commemorates the death of Luís Vaz de Camões on June 10, 1580; and

WHEREAS, His Excellency Antonio Costa, the Prime Minister of Portugal, will be visiting the State of California from June 11 to June 14, inclusive, in the framework of a visit to the United States with the main purpose of celebrating Portuguese Day, June 10, with the Portuguese-American communities in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The remainder of the Prime Minister's visit will focus on the opportunities for trade, investment, and economic cooperation between Portugal and the State of California; and

WHEREAS, On June 14, at the State Capitol, the Prime Minister of Portugal will be introduced to the Senate Chamber, where he will make an address; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby declares June 10, 2018, as Portugal Day, a day to celebrate Portuguese national heritage; and be it further

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