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SR-90 (2017-2018)

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ENROLLED MAY 11, 2018

PASSED IN SENATE MAY 10, 2018

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2017–2018 REGULAR SESSION

SENATE RESOLUTION

NO. 90

Introduced by Senator Pan

March 08, 2018

Relative to a sister state relationship with Baden-Württemberg, Germany

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SR 90, Pan.

WHEREAS, In 1853, a Turn Verein club was established in Sacramento and continues today to operate as a center to promote German heritage and culture. In 1848, the "Turners" were liberal-minded Germans who wanted to overthrow the yoke of Napoleonic despotism. They organized themselves through athletic gymnasium clubs known as turnvereins. The club members promoted their concepts of republicanism and freedom of the governed. In Baden-Württemberg, they formed a loose-knit, semi-militant militia to challenge the rule of the puppet Napoleonic government then ruling Baden-Württemberg. For a while they achieved military success, but they were ultimately defeated at the Battle of Kandern. The military defeat and subsequent persecution of the Turners drove many of them to the new United States of America, where their liberal political ideas were readily received. Many of the Turners headed to California with other gold seekers, where they continued to oppose slavery and were adamant supporters of California's entry into the Union as a "free state." The Turners' strong opposition to slavery made them very important in German-American immigrant communities supporting Abraham Lincoln in the election of 1860. Turners formed Lincoln's personal guard at his inauguration; and

WHEREAS, John Augustus Sutter inextricably links the histories of California and Baden-Württemberg. In 1978, a new cornerstone was placed in the California State Capitol Building to commemorate the relationship between California and Baden-Württemberg and their common bond through John Sutter. Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., was responsible for the placement and commemoration of the cornerstone, which symbolizes the value of the relationship between the two states of California and Baden-Württemberg; and

WHEREAS, There have been many cultural, historical, educational, and business connections between Germany and California since the early 1800s. Kandern, a picturesque town in southwest Baden-Württemberg, was the birthplace of John Sutter, who founded Sutter's Fort in Sacramento and Sutter's Mill in Coloma, the site where gold was discovered, initiating the 1849 California Gold Rush. Prince Paul, the Duke of Württemberg, visited Sutter in 1850 and wrote glowingly of Sutter's agricultural endeavors. Cuttings from Sutter's vineyard in Sutterville were used to cultivate the vineyards for Sutter Home wine in Napa. His son, John Augustus Sutter, Jr., was the founder and planner of Sacramento. Currently, 22 percent of California's population is of German descent; and

WHEREAS, Sutter was born in 1803 in the village of Kandern in the Grand Duchy of Baden, now part of the German state of Baden-Württemberg. In 1834, Sutter made the decision to go to the New World to improve his personal financial condition and build a better life for his family. Sutter left his wife and four children in Europe while he ventured through the North American West and ultimately into the Sacramento Valley in 1839. In January of 1850, Sutter reunited with his wife and family and he and Anna lived together until their deaths in 1880. Events precipitated by Sutter, which happened in the ensuing time between his departure and the reunion with his family, resulted in the birth of the City of Sacramento and dramatically altered the history of California, the United States, and the world. Sutter brought to California his concept of a republican government and the culture, language, and social proclivities of his homeland. To achieve his goals, Sutter challenged the dangers of the untamed North American West and brought new ideas to what was then Mexican California. John Sutter built the first permanent European-style settlement in California's vast Central Valley and was responsible for the founding of Sacramento. William Tecumseh Sherman, the famous Civil War general and one of the engineers who surveyed Sacramento, once said, "No one was more responsible for California becoming a part of the United States than John Sutter." Sutter's name became synonymous with the Gold Rush and the Western Migration. Soon, businesses, hospitals, buildings, schools, streets, and counties all used his name for their identity. The same thing happened in Europe, where the Sutter name and reputation were hailed for bringing fame and prestige to the Baden-Württemberg region of Germany and Kandern specifically. Sutter's name still graces the names of streets, businesses, social clubs, and schools on both sides of the Atlantic; and

WHEREAS, The states of California and Baden-Württemberg have an expanding bilateral relationship in the areas of climate change, health, environmental sustainability, next generation transportation systems, and other areas of common interest; and

WHEREAS, The Under2 Coalition was established in 2015 by California Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., and Baden-Württemberg Minister President Winfried Kretschmann, which has led to several exchanges between our states for the deployment of clean energy technologies and strategies to mitigate global climate change. The Under2 Coalition currently includes many countries, as well as states and cities within the United States, which represents about \$27 trillion in economic power; and

WHEREAS, The California Baden-Württemberg Sister States Organization was incorporated in 2016 as a nonprofit corporation to promote business opportunities, collaborative environmental programs, German American cultural ties, and student exchange programs, and to provide support for the Under2 Coalition. The organization members currently include individuals, families, corporations, and nonprofit organizations; and

WHEREAS, The California Baden-Württemberg Sister States Organization is an effective nonprofit corporation with organization bylaws, a board of directors, and committee members consisting of Susannah Martin (President), Peter Völker (Visionary and Vice President), Mark Lamb (Treasurer), Mackenzie Wieser (Communications), Steve Beck (Historian), and Dennis Schuetzle (Secretary). Peter Völker, the founder of the organization, lives on Sutter Street in the City of Kandern in Baden-Württemberg; and

WHEREAS, Considering the importance of enhancing the above-described relationships, our two states have agreed to enter into a sister state relationship, which will come into force upon the signing of an agreement by representatives of both governments. The agreement will remain in force unless either side proposes to terminate it; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, That the Senate encourages these efforts to establish a sister state relationship between California and Baden-Württemberg; and be it further

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