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SCR-57 50th anniversary of the Special Olympics. (2019-2020)

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 57

CHAPTER 154

Relative to the 50th Anniversary of the Special Olympics.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 19, 2019.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 57, Hueso. 50th anniversary of the Special Olympics.

This measure would commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Special Olympics.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, In June of 1962, Eunice Kennedy Shriver selflessly and honorably started a summer camp for young people with intellectual disabilities in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, This promising premise, after yielding much success, evolved and developed throughout the 1960s, culminating in the first Special Olympics competition, held at Soldier Field in Chicago, Illinois, in July of 1968; and

WHEREAS, On December 2, 1968, the status of Special Olympics was formalized when United States Senator Edward Kennedy held a conference to announce the formation of Special Olympics, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, In 1969, Rafer Johnson founded Special Olympics California, and on July 26 of that year, the Western Regional Special Olympics were held at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum for 900 persons with intellectual disabilities from 20 counties in the western United States; and

WHEREAS, In December of 1971, Special Olympics experienced a triumphant development when the United States Olympic Committee granted the organization official approval as the only other entity permitted to use the name "Olympics" in the United States; and

WHEREAS, In March of 1979, Special Olympics California celebrated its 10th anniversary with 15,000 athletes participating in local training and competition programs statewide; and

WHEREAS, By the mid-1980s, Special Olympics programs had attained a global presence, boasting programs in over 50 nations and all major continents; and

WHEREAS, In 1986, Special Olympics once again cemented its universal recognition when the United Nations launched the International Year of Special Olympics, commending the organization for "uniting the world"; and

WHEREAS, In April of 1989, Special Olympics California co-hosted the International Special Olympics Winter Games in Olympic Valley, California, and Reno, Nevada; and

WHEREAS, In March of 1993, Special Olympics California launched Athletes for Outreach, training 14 Special Olympics athletes as public speakers and spokespersons for Special Olympics; and

WHEREAS, In 1995, California Special Olympics divided into two separately incorporated chapters; Special Olympics Southern California and Special Olympics Northern California; and

WHEREAS, On December 17, 1998, President Bill Clinton and then First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton hosted "A Very Special Christmas from Washington, D.C.," establishing the first time that the White House hosted a Special Olympics gala; and

WHEREAS, On October 30, 2004, President George W. Bush signed the Special Olympics Sport and Empowerment Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-406), giving \$15,000,000 every year for the next five years to Special Olympics programs; and

WHEREAS, On October 2, 2007, Shanghai, China, hosted the 12th summer Special Olympics World Games, drawing over 7,500 athletes from 164 countries; and

WHEREAS, In June of 2010, the first Special Olympics Global Congress was held in Marrakesh, Morocco; and

WHEREAS, In March of 2012, Special Olympics' international influence hit a new record, with over 4,000,000 athletes participating in programs across the globe; and

WHEREAS, In July of 2014, President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama hosted "Celebration for Special Olympics and a Unified Generation" at the White House, with some of the world's leading business leaders, sports legends, social activists, and entertainers in attendance; and

WHEREAS, On July 25, 2015, the Special Olympics World Summer Games were held in Los Angeles, California. More than 6,200 athletes and unified partners from 165 countries took part in competitions in 25 sports; and

WHEREAS, In July of 2018, Special Olympics proudly celebrated its 50th anniversary; and

WHEREAS, By 2019, Special Olympics has heavily developed and streamlined instrumental initiatives designed to impact everyday students in California, including the Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools Program, the Healthy Athletes Program, and the Community Sports Program; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the recent years, these programs have proven successful at creating learning environments which are inclusive for all; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Special Olympics; and be it further

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