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SR-76 (2019-2020)

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ENROLLED JUNE 16, 2020

PASSED IN SENATE JUNE 11, 2020

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2019–2020 REGULAR SESSION

SENATE RESOLUTION

NO. 76

Introduced by Senator Pan

February 05, 2020

Relative to Nowrūz.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SR 76, Pan.

WHEREAS, Nowrūz (pronounced no-rooz) originated in ancient Persia more than 3,000 years ago and marks the traditional Persian New Year beginning on the vernal equinox and celebrates the arrival of spring; and

WHEREAS, Nowrūz is a combination of two Persian words: the first, “now,” means new, and the second, “ruz,” means day. Together they mean “new day,” which commemorates the new year for many Persian and Central Asian communities all over the world. It is celebrated on the exact day of the astronomical Northward equinox, which occurs on March 20 or the following day where it is observed; and

WHEREAS, The “new day” symbolizes a commitment to springtime renewal, peace, and overall solidarity between generations, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS, Nowrūz’s most notable festivities include the creation of the Haft-Sin table, which is an arrangement of seven symbolic items starting with “S” in Persian. This table often includes sumac (crushed spice or berries), senjed (sweet dry fruit of lotus trees), serkeh (vinegar), and seeb (apples), which each represent various hopes for the new year, including health, wealth, and prosperity. Additionally, a wisdom book is often included in the form of a Koran or Bible. These festivities last over 13 days and begin on the eve of the first Wednesday of the year; and

WHEREAS, Nowrūz is rooted in Zoroastrianism, which is an ancient Persian religion that predates both Christianity and Islam and originated in Iran around 1000 B.C. It is also a secular holiday that is enjoyed by people of various faiths around the world, and is surrounded by many rituals and celebrations that have taken on various interpretations. During Nowrūz, people wear new

clothes, visit family, reconnect with community members, forgive past wrongs, and exchange gifts as a sign of peace and friendship; and

WHEREAS, While Nowrūz is celebrated and observed principally in Iran, the traditions of Nowrūz are strong among people in Afghanistan, Iraq, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, India, Pakistan, Turkey, Canada, and the United States; and

WHEREAS, According to the National Organization for Civil Registration, the United States has the highest number of Iranians outside of Iran, close to 1,000,000 people, with over one-half residing in the state of California. Most Iranian Americans reside in the greater Los Angeles area, which has been affectionately referred to as "Tehrangeles" or "Little Persia" among Iranian Americans; and

WHEREAS, The Los Angeles City Council designated the intersection of Westwood Boulevard and Wilkins Avenue in west Los Angeles as "Persian Square" to commemorate the first Persian business to open in the City of Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed International Nowrūz Day in 2010 at the enterprise of several countries that uphold this global tradition, and the first global Nowrūz festival, held the same year, serves to remind us of the many noteworthy and lasting contributions of Persian culture to the ever-growing social and economic tapestry of our country. After thousands of years in the making, Nowrūz remains beloved, universal, and deeply embedded in Persian culture; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, That the Senate joins the Persians and other communities throughout the state in celebrating Friday, March 20, 2020, as the beginning of the Persian New Year and extends best wishes for a peaceful and prosperous Nowrūz to all Californians; and be it further

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