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ACR-5 AMVETS 75th Anniversary. (2021-2022)

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 5

CHAPTER 93

Relative to veterans.

[Filed with Secretary of State July 20, 2021.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 5, Mathis. AMVETS 75th Anniversary.

This measure would commend AMVETS Department of California on its 75th year of providing benefits and services to Veterans.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, The unprecedented call to military service demanded by World War II led to a record number of returning war Veterans in need of assistance and support; and

WHEREAS, The roots of AMVETS National can be traced to a gathering of 18 Veterans in Kansas City, Missouri, on December 10, 1944, who named themselves "The American Veterans" of World War II; and

WHEREAS, This group sought to provide more comprehensive assistance than was currently available from organizations run by Veterans of earlier wars and those operating on college campuses during that time; and

WHEREAS, On July 23, 1947, AMVETS National became the first World War II organization chartered by Congress when President Harry S. Truman signed Public Law 216 (H.R. 1888), giving AMVETS a federal charter under Title 36 of the United States Code and status as a 501(c)(19) nonprofit Veterans service organization; and

WHEREAS, In honor and recognition of the sacrifices made by all Veterans, membership in AMVETS is open to anyone who is currently serving or has honorably served in the United States Armed Forces, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine, as well as the National Guard and reserve components; and

WHEREAS, The AMVETS Department of California was established on October 20, 1945, and today has more than 8,000 members and 48 local posts in California communities; and

WHEREAS, AMVETS established a partnership between the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the AMVETS Department of California Service Foundation, chartered June 7, 1949, called the Welcome Home program that offers furnishings and household items to homeless Veterans who receive federal Department of Housing and Urban Development assistance and supports the United States Department of Veterans Affairs' goal to end Veteran homelessness; and

WHEREAS, The AMVETS Welcome Home program operates four thrift stores in Fresno, Long Beach, and the Hilltop and Sutherland areas of San Diego and the AMVETS Welcome Home program has made more than 5,300 successful furnishing and

household item deliveries throughout California since 2012; and

WHEREAS, Welcome Home deliveries set the standard for thanking formerly homeless Veterans for their service by getting them not only off the streets, but into a furnished residence, providing them with purpose, hope, and dignity; and

WHEREAS, In reflection of AMVETS Department of California's mission to serve at the forefront of community and Veterans' services in California, any patriotic citizen can participate through volunteerism and by donating used clothing and household goods to the AMVETS thrift stores; and

WHEREAS, AMVETS service officers assisted California Veterans in filing 42,052 claims with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, which resulted in new and retroactive claim payments of almost \$56,600,000 for California Veterans; and

WHEREAS, AMVETS is active in advocating on behalf of Veterans and their dependents before the Legislature, the state Department of Veterans Affairs, and state and local agencies, as well as supporting California's National Guard; and

WHEREAS, AMVETS sponsors legislation, supports and monitors numerous Veteran-related bills during legislative sessions, and actively monitors aspects of the state budget process, which affect such issues as Veterans Homes, CalVet, National Guard, County Veterans Service Officers, and Veterans outreach programs; and

WHEREAS, In 2010 AMVETS noted the unimaginable number of Veterans committing suicide and began a campaign called 22 Every Day to help Veterans and others to recognize the signs of suicide, bring awareness of higher rates of suicide among women Veterans, and explore the causes of suffering and feeling of helplessness, which led to 80 verified successful interventions; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That AMVETS, since 1945, has exhibited leadership, advocacy, and service for California's Veterans and their families; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature commends AMVETS Department of California for providing benefits and services to their fellow Veterans, as well as playing an important role in the civic life of their communities for 75 years; and be it further

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