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ACR-77 Sea Level Rise Awareness Month. (2021-2022)

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 77

CHAPTER 139

Relative to Sea Level Rise Awareness Month.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 17, 2021.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 77, Bennett. Sea Level Rise Awareness Month.

This measure would proclaim May 2021 as Sea Level Rise Awareness Month in California in order to recognize the devastating effects of climate change and encourage local governments to take action.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, The Legislature recognizes that sea level rise will continue to threaten coastal communities and infrastructure through more frequent flooding and inundation, as well as increased cliff, bluff, dune, and beach erosion; and

WHEREAS, Human development and pressures from a rising sea threaten the already diminished coastal wetlands along the California coast. Hundreds of miles of roads and railways, harbors and airports, and power plants and wastewater treatment facilities, in addition to thousands of businesses and homes, are at risk from future flooding, inundation, and coastal retreat. The total potential impact of such coastal risks is significantly larger. Not only are economic assets and households in flood zones increasingly exposed, but also people's safety could be threatened and lives could be disrupted; and

WHEREAS, California also has the nation's largest ocean economy, valued at over \$44,000,000,000 per year, with the great majority of California's ocean economy connected to coastal recreation and tourism, as well as ports and shipping. Many of the facilities and much of the infrastructure that support this ocean economy, as well as the state's many miles of public beaches, lie within a few feet of present high tide; and

WHEREAS, Sea level rise is a slow-moving threat, but it demands immediate action. Global warming creates extreme hazards that cause significant harm to people, homes, infrastructure, and the environment. Thus, various cities and counties have taken steps to address global warming, including preventing sea level rise; and

WHEREAS, Released in March 2016, the City and County of San Francisco's Sea Level Rise Action Plan defines an overarching vision and set of objectives for future sea level rise and coastal flooding planning and mitigation. Through proactive, thoughtful adaptation planning, the City and County of San Francisco intends to minimize risks and meet the challenges posed by rising seas; and

WHEREAS, The San Mateo County Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District gives the county and its cities the opportunity to coordinate across jurisdictional lines, avoid duplication of efforts, build expertise, and create a unified voice to obtain state and federal funds to address flooding, sea level rise, coastal erosion, and stormwater infrastructure improvements; and

WHEREAS, The City of San Diego's landmark Climate Action Plan leads in efforts to mitigate climate change through programs and policies that aim to eliminate one-half of the city's greenhouse gas emissions by 2035; and

WHEREAS, The Hayward Area Shoreline Planning Agency, a joint powers agency consisting of the City of Hayward, the Hayward Area Recreation and Park District, and the East Bay Regional Park District, has greatly served its community by conducting two vulnerability assessments for the Hayward Shoreline and is currently producing a long-range Shoreline Master Plan that will outline adaptation measures to mitigate against sea level rise in order to protect the city's critical infrastructure, natural resources, recreational features, businesses, and residential neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, To combat the effects of climate change, the Orange County Coastkeeper partnered with Coastal Resources Management, Inc. and the Back Bay Science Center to undertake innovative projects such as the eelgrass restoration project and the oyster habitats and, with the help of volunteers, the Orange County Coastkeeper is able to protect the shoreline from erosion and sea level rise; and

WHEREAS, The Beach Erosion Authority for Clean Oceans and Nourishment, a joint powers agency spanning the Counties of Santa Barbara and Ventura, has conducted coastal erosion studies and restoration projects within its jurisdiction in coordination with the parks, planning, and public works departments of its member agencies to address sea level rise and coastal erosion; and

WHEREAS, It is the obligation of the Legislature to encourage local governments to form coalitions to counter sea level rise and beach erosion and preserve marine life; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature proclaims May 2021 as Sea Level Rise Awareness Month in California in order to recognize the devastating effects of climate change and encourage local governments to take action; and be it further

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