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ACR-20 American Red Cross Month. (2023-2024)

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 20

CHAPTER 33

Relative to American Red Cross Month.

[Filed with Secretary of State April 25, 2023.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 20, Rodriguez. American Red Cross Month.

This measure would proclaim March 2023 as American Red Cross Month and would dedicate it to all those who continue to advance the noble legacy of the organization's founder. The measure would encourage all Californians to reach out, support the organization's humanitarian mission, and join in their commitment to care for people in need.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, March is American Red Cross Month, a special time to honor the kindness of our neighbors who aid families in need every day in California, across the United States, and around the world. Their dedication touches millions of lives each year as they carry out the organization's 142-year-old mission of preventing and alleviating suffering; and

WHEREAS, People have stepped up to help others in need, whether it was responding to disasters across the country or rolling up their sleeves to give blood when our country faced a severe blood shortage; and

WHEREAS, Day after day, we are witnessing and responding to devastating and dramatic disasters exacerbated by climate change. Wildfires are relentless, storms are intensifying, and floods are escalating. The climate crisis is not ahead of us; it is here. Climate change affects vulnerable populations disproportionately, which increases the need for American Red Cross support, their Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) programs, and their framework for climate change action focused on resilience, education, and sustainability; and

WHEREAS, Here in California, local families have relied on American Red Cross volunteers for comfort and hope while coping with over 3,000 local disasters. Last year, over 25,000 California volunteers assisted with small and large disasters, such as the devastating wildfires. Volunteers also helped over 5,000 people affected by home fires in the state by addressing their urgent needs, including food, lodging, and recovery support; and

WHEREAS, California volunteers have supported local families in other ways too. Last year, almost 400,000 people enrolled in training classes that taught lifesaving skills, such as first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), water safety, and caregiving. The American Red Cross provided services to military members, veterans, retirees, and their families. Over 45,000 cases were open to assist in various ways; and

WHEREAS, Every two seconds, someone in the United States needs blood. Nationwide, the American Red Cross provides 40 percent of the country's blood supply. In California, the American Red Cross collects over 330,000 units of red blood cells each

year. In addition, over 130,000 units of platelets are collected each year to help treat trauma and cancer patients. Blood products are also essential for surgeries and chronic illnesses; and

WHEREAS, In January 2022, the American Red Cross declared a first-ever national blood shortage crisis. Due to the blood shortage, some hospitals are receiving a quarter of the blood they need. Doctors are forced to choose between who receives care immediately and who must wait until more blood is available. In more dire cases, hospitals are unable to treat anyone because of exhausting their blood inventory. In the event of a disaster or large-scale emergency, a shortage of available blood may also result in otherwise preventable loss of life; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 200 years since the birth of American Red Cross founder Clara Barton, this lifesaving work is vital to strengthening our community's resilience; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby proclaims the month of March 2023 as American Red Cross Month and dedicates it to all those who continue to advance Clara Barton's noble legacy; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature encourages all Californians to reach out, support the organization's humanitarian mission, and join in their commitment to care for people in need; and be it further

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