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ACR-95 Healthy Homes Awareness Month. (2023-2024)

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 95

CHAPTER 155

Relative to Healthy Homes Awareness Month.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 08, 2023.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 95, Wicks. Healthy Homes Awareness Month.

This measure would designate the month of June 2023 as Healthy Homes Awareness Month.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development recognizes June as National Healthy Homes Month; and

WHEREAS, Healthy homes are dry, pest free, contaminant free, safe, ventilated, clean, well maintained, thermally controlled, and affordable; and

WHEREAS, Unhealthy conditions, including physical safety hazards and exposure to lead-based paint, radon, mold, pests, allergens, and second- and third-hand smoke, cause or contribute to a wide range of illness and disease, including lead poisoning, asthma, cancer, and physical injury; and

WHEREAS, Living with substandard housing conditions or housing costs exceeding 30 percent of income are associated with increased stress and other mental health impacts; and

WHEREAS, California faces considerable healthy homes challenges, including, according to 2021 American Housing Survey data, nearly 538,000 homes having "severely inadequate" or "moderately inadequate" plumbing, heating, and electrical systems, nearly 1,000,000 homes having signs of mice, over 1,400,000 reporting cockroaches, over 1,500,000 having water leaks, and over 350,000 having mold; and

WHEREAS, Continued investment is needed to acquire homes in disrepair that are currently not affordable, rehabilitate them, and convert them to permanent affordable housing that can be made available at a cost that is below 30 percent of their residents' incomes and is free from health and safety hazards; and

WHEREAS, It is critical to maintain the health, quality, and safety of our existing subsidized affordable homes, many of which are located in older buildings, with continued state investment to ensure habitability and long-term affordability; and

WHEREAS, Farmworkers are a key to California's economy, yet disproportionately face unhealthy and structurally deficient housing conditions that are often exacerbated by crowding or lack of affordability; and

WHEREAS, Mobilehomes represent a substantial portion of the unsubsidized affordable housing supply in many communities, particularly in rural areas, and tend to house older Californians who tend to have more health vulnerabilities than the general public, yet water systems in mobilehome parks are more likely to incur health violations, and health and safety inspections were conducted at fewer than half of the mobilehome parks under state jurisdiction between 2010 and 2019; and

WHEREAS, In 2021, nearly 7,000 children tested in California had elevated blood lead levels, with deteriorated lead-based paint as the leading cause of exposure; and

WHEREAS, For older Californians, over 324,000 went to the emergency department or were hospitalized due to falls in 2016, often attributed to unsafe conditions in the home, which is a 68 percent increase from 2006; and

WHEREAS, Renters, who are, 2.2 times more likely to have mold in their homes, and 2 times more likely to report cockroaches in their homes, disproportionately live in unhealthy conditions, according to 2021 American Housing Survey data; and

WHEREAS, An estimated one in three nonsmokers living in rental housing is exposed to secondhand smoke; and

WHEREAS, Disparities in the quality of rental housing and owner-occupied housing disproportionately harm communities of color in California as 62.9 percent of African Americans and 55.5 percent of Latinxs rent their home compared to 44.7 percent of Whites; and

WHEREAS, Private and public investment in housing quality can improve health outcomes, reduce health care costs, and reduce racial and ethnic health disparities while also making homes more resilient to extreme weather and wildfires; and

WHEREAS, Many families and households in California are unaware that their homes can have serious health and safety hazards, and awareness about the dangers of unhealthy or unsafe housing can save lives; and

WHEREAS, Many federal, state, and local programs provide support to homeowners, landlords, and tenants to mitigate and prevent injury and illness from unhealthy housing conditions, including childhood lead poisoning prevention, tobacco control, weatherization, aging in place, home repair, and housing rehabilitation and preservation programs; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby designates the month of June 2023 as Healthy Homes Awareness Month in order to increase awareness and understanding of healthy housing, to educate homeowners, landlords, and renters of programs and resources available to mitigate unhealthy housing conditions, and to prevent those conditions from arising in the future; and be it further

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