

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 71

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 145

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 71—Relative to Africana studies.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 27, 2013.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 71, Weber. Africana studies programs.

This measure would formally endorse the invaluable work of California's Africana studies programs, and their faculty, staff, and students. The measure would recognize the leadership provided by the beneficiaries of those programs, and would support the continuation of Africana studies programs in California's institutions of higher education.

WHEREAS, The academic discipline of Africana studies encompasses research, scholarship, and programs that analyze and reflect the experiences and contributions of African natives and African Americans; and

WHEREAS, Formal Africana studies programs and departments at California's universities resulted from student-led movements dating back to the 1960s. These movements included demonstrations and student protests, where students, faculty, and community members demanded university courses relevant to them and their communities; and

WHEREAS, Since the 1960s, Africana and Black studies have been the academic and intellectual extension of the Civil Rights Movement; and

WHEREAS, The formalization of Africana studies increased awareness of the need for faculty, students, and staff from diverse communities in California's universities; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Nathan Hare, known as the father of Black studies programs in the United States, was the department chair of the nation's first African American studies academic program in 1968 at San Francisco State University. Following a similar pursuit, faculty members including, but not limited to, Carrol Wayman, Vernon Oaks, Norman Chambers, Shirley W. Thomas, Shirley N. Weber, and Harold K. Brown developed the first Black studies program at San Diego State University in 1972; and

WHEREAS, In addition to offering the first African American studies program in the United States, the California State University has nine programs statewide as well as seven ethnic and gender studies programs leading to undergraduate and graduate degrees; and

WHEREAS, Over 400 students chose to major in African American studies for fall of 2012 and another 200 in gender or ethnic studies; and

WHEREAS, The University of California campuses at Berkeley, Davis, Riverside, Irvine, Los Angeles, and Santa Barbara offer undergraduate

degrees in one of African American studies, Black studies, or Afro-American studies; and

WHEREAS, Africana studies is comprised of several disciplines, including art history, humanities, political science, behavioral science, and history; and

WHEREAS, Africana studies, known in some departments as Black, Pan-African, or Afro-American studies, encompass the origin, history, culture, experiences, heritage, achievements, and contributions of African natives and African Americans; and

WHEREAS, Africana studies, a respected academic field, has fostered the development of professional organizations, institutionalized departments, research journals, award-winning publications, and other related programs across the United States; and

WHEREAS, Departments, programs, and related projects in the field of Africana and Black studies promote constructive communication and collaborative efforts among diverse groups, and encourage respect, understanding, appreciation, equality, and dignity among all groups; and

WHEREAS, The study of the roles, contributions, and achievements of African natives and African Americans provides a rich and in-depth perspective for understanding California and United States history; and

WHEREAS, Africana and related studies incorporate the influence of African natives and African Americans on the California education system and on America's diverse racial and ethnic groups; and

WHEREAS, Africana studies and related academic disciplines promote a view of ethnic groups as significant contributors to the history and diversity of California and the United States history; and

WHEREAS, Africana studies has been the model and inspiration for other ethnic, gender, and social education programs throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, The continuation and expansion of Africana studies within our state's educational system would encourage students to analyze and synthesize information with a global perspective; and

WHEREAS, Support for postsecondary Africana studies departments, programs, and related projects, including financial support, will allow for the continued guidance and teaching of a new generation of students who will enrich and contribute to California policy, education, and government; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature of the State of California formally endorses the invaluable work of California's Africana studies departments, programs, and related projects, and their faculty, staff, and students; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature of the State of California also recognizes that the leadership provided by the beneficiaries of these programs has contributed greatly to the academic rigor, prominence, and distinguishing qualities of California's colleges and universities and the vitality of other public and private institutions, including the California state government; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature of the State of California supports the continuation of Africana studies departments, programs, and related projects in California's institutions of higher education; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the Regents of the University of California, the Trustees of the California State University, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, and the author for appropriate distribution.