

## Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 25

### RESOLUTION CHAPTER 31

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 25—Relative to Sunshine Week.

[Filed with Secretary of State April 17, 2017.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 25, Maienschein. Sunshine Week.

This measure would designate March 12, 2017, through March 18, 2017, as Sunshine Week.

WHEREAS, California has a long tradition in support of open government and access to government records; and

WHEREAS, In 1968, California enacted the California Public Records Act that expressly declared that “access to information concerning the conduct of the people’s business is a fundamental and necessary right of every person in this state”; and

WHEREAS, In 1953, California enacted the Ralph M. Brown Act guaranteeing the public’s right to attend and participate in local governing bodies; and

WHEREAS, In 1967, the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act was adopted by the state to mandate open meetings of state agencies, boards, and commissions; and

WHEREAS, California voters approved Proposition 59, a state constitutional amendment, also known as the “Sunshine Amendment,” in 2004 that furthers open government protections and the rights of voters; and

WHEREAS, Open government reforms continue to spread across the country, including the adoption of open data policies to urge innovation and economic development through the use of high-value government data; and

WHEREAS, California entrepreneurs created the information technology revolution and are creating opportunities for government to use technology to improve performance, transparency, and trust; and

WHEREAS, Many local governments have been leaders in open records and public meetings, and the Cities of San Francisco, Oakland, West Sacramento, Sacramento, San Diego, and Los Angeles and the County of San Mateo have adopted open data policies; and

WHEREAS, California voters reaffirmed the people’s mandate for open government through the approval of Proposition 42 in 2014; and

WHEREAS, With an inaugural grant from the Knight Foundation, the American Society of News Editors launched Sunshine Week in March 2005, and it continues to be celebrated each year in mid-March to coincide with

National Freedom of Information Day and President James Madison's birthday on March 16; and

WHEREAS, Although originally created by journalists, Sunshine Week is about the public's right to know what its government is doing and why; and

WHEREAS, Sunshine Week is now a national initiative to promote a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information. Participants include news media, civic groups, libraries, nonprofit entities, schools, and others interested in the public's right to know; and

WHEREAS, Sunshine Week seeks to enlighten and empower people to play an active role in all levels of government, and to give people access to information that makes their lives better and their communities stronger; and

WHEREAS, The coverage, commentaries, and activities promoting open government during Sunshine Week have led to tangible, meaningful changes to people's lives, and the laws that govern them; and

WHEREAS, The California Newspaper Publishers Association, California Forward, the League of Women Voters of California, Californians Aware, the First Amendment Coalition, and other nongovernmental organizations continue to work alongside media and government allies to enhance public access to their government; and

WHEREAS, Sunshine Week is increasing public awareness and people are playing more of a role in the actions that affect their communities. People are learning what kinds of information they have a right to see, how and where to obtain that information, and what to do if someone tries to prevent them from accessing it; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring,* That Sunshine Week is a celebration of the public's commitment to openness and an exploration of what open government means in a technology-enhanced future; and be it further

*Resolved,* That the Legislature hereby designates March 12, 2017, through March 18, 2017, as Sunshine Week and encourages all Californians to participate in appropriate activities relating to open government and access to public information; and be it further

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