

Senate Resolution No. 11

Introduced by Senator Leyva

Relative to International Women’s Day.

WHEREAS, International Women’s Day first emerged from the activities of labor movements at the turn of the 20th century in North America and across Europe; and

WHEREAS, The first National Woman’s Day was observed in the United States in 1909 in honor of the 1908 garment workers’ strike in New York, where women protested against working conditions; and

WHEREAS, International Women’s Day was marked for the first time in 1911 by Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland, where more than one million women and men attended rallies demanding the rights for women to vote and to hold public office, women’s rights to work, to vocational training, and to an end to discrimination on the job; and

WHEREAS, In 1913–14, International Women’s Day also became a mechanism for protesting World War I. As part of the peace movement, Russian women observed their first International Women’s Day on the last Sunday in February, and elsewhere in Europe, on or around March 8 of the following year, women held rallies either to protest the war or to express solidarity with other activists; and

WHEREAS, In 1917, against the backdrop of the war, women in Russia again chose to protest and strike for “Bread and Peace” on the last Sunday in February, which fell on March 8 on the Gregorian calendar. Four days later, the Czar abdicated and the provisional government granted women the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, In 1975, during International Women’s Year, the United Nations began celebrating International Women’s Day on March 8; and

WHEREAS, In 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and the international treaty, described as an international bill of rights for women, was instituted on September 3, 1981, and has been ratified by 189 states; and

WHEREAS, International Women’s Day has assumed a new global dimension for women in developed and developing countries alike. The growing international women’s movement has helped make the commemoration a rallying point to build support for women’s rights and participation in the political and economic arenas; and

WHEREAS, International Women’s Day is a time to reflect on progress made, to call for change, and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by ordinary women who have played an extraordinary role in the history of their countries and communities; and

WHEREAS, The United Nations has designated the theme for the 2021 International Women’s Day as “Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world.” The theme celebrates the tremendous efforts by women and girls around the world in shaping a more equal future and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, In addition to persistent, preexisting social and systemic barriers to women’s participation and leadership, with the COVID-19 pandemic new barriers have emerged. Across the world, women face increased domestic violence, unpaid care duties, unemployment, and poverty. Despite women making up a majority of front-line workers, there is disproportionate and inadequate representation of women in national and global COVID-19 policy spaces; and

WHEREAS, To uphold women’s rights and fully leverage the potential of women’s leadership in pandemic preparedness and response, the perspectives of women and girls in all of their diversity must be integrated in the formulation and implementation of policies and programs in all spheres and at all stages of pandemic response and recovery; and

WHEREAS, Innovation and technology provide unprecedented opportunities, yet trends indicate a growing gender digital divide, and women are underrepresented in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and design. This prevents women from developing and influencing gender-responsive innovations to achieve transformative gains for society. From mobile banking to artificial intelligence and the internet, it is vital that women’s ideas and experiences equally influence the design and implementation of the innovations that will shape our future societies; and

WHEREAS, International Women’s Day stands as a reminder of the long history of women’s social activism and organizing; fighting for equal wages, better working conditions, and the right to vote and that while women make up more than one-half of our population, they are

disproportionately represented in our state; too few in leadership positions and too many who live in poverty; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, That the Senate designates March 8, 2021, as International Women’s Day; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

Senate Resolution No. 11 read and adopted by the Senate March 8, 2021.

Attest: _____
Secretary of the Senate