

**Introduced by Senator Nielsen**

**(Coauthors: Senators Archuleta, Borgeas, Bradford, Caballero, Cortese, Dahle, Dodd, Hertzberg, Hurtado, Jones, Newman, Ochoa Bogh, Skinner, Wiener, and Wilk)**

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August 19, 2021

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 60—Relative to Art Therapy Week of Civic Engagement.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 60, as introduced, Nielsen. Art Therapy Week of Civic Engagement.

This measure would recognize the week of October 10, 2021 through October 16, 2021, and every year on these dates thereafter, as Art Therapy Week of Civic Engagement to commemorate the contributions of professional art therapists to California’s communities.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Art therapy is an integrative mental health
- 2 profession that combines knowledge and understanding of human
- 3 development and psychological theories and techniques obtained
- 4 through graduate level education in psychology in addition to
- 5 practice of the visual arts and the creative process. Art therapy
- 6 provides a unique approach to help consumers of mental health
- 7 services improve their psychological health, cognitive abilities,
- 8 and sensory motor functions; and
- 9 WHEREAS, California is home to 625 registered art therapists
- 10 according to the Art Therapy Credentialing Board; and

1 WHEREAS, The field of art therapy is growing and the  
2 professional, academic, and research foundation is expanding. A  
3 master’s degree, including clinical fieldwork, is required for  
4 entry-level practice in art therapy. Supervised postgraduate clinical  
5 hours are also required to obtain registration as an art therapist.  
6 Minimum educational and professional standards are established  
7 by the American Art Therapy Association, Inc., a membership and  
8 advocacy organization; and

9 WHEREAS, Art therapy uniquely promotes the ability to unlock  
10 emotional expression by facilitating nonverbal as well as verbal  
11 communication. Art therapists utilize artmaking, the creative  
12 process, and their knowledge and training in psychology and human  
13 development when working with clients; and

14 WHEREAS, Art therapy is practiced in many settings, including  
15 in behavioral health and substance abuse treatment, as well as in  
16 rehabilitation, medical, educational, community, and forensic  
17 settings. Additionally, art therapy is practiced in private practice,  
18 workshops, and small-group settings. Clients come to art therapy  
19 from all walks of life, facing a full array of challenges. Individuals,  
20 couples, families, and community groups all benefit from various  
21 art therapy formats. Art therapists serve clients in both traditional  
22 and nontraditional spaces, such as hospitals, schools, residential  
23 facilities, Native American service facilities, LGBTQIA+ facilities,  
24 veteran’s clinics, community clinics, community centers, crisis  
25 centers, forensic institutions, senior communities, and museums;  
26 and

27 WHEREAS, Art therapists provide critical services, such as  
28 nonverbal art-making therapy, that help a client discharge acute  
29 stress accumulated during critical incidents, which are traumatic  
30 or disaster-like experiences. During the COVID-19 pandemic, art  
31 therapists have provided virtual support groups that helped  
32 members of the public experiencing grief or loss to maintain a  
33 healthy balance between work and family; and

34 WHEREAS, In 2019, art therapists in Northern California  
35 provided monthly support groups in a community art studio in  
36 Chico, California, for people impacted by the Camp Fire in Butte  
37 County. Art therapists in Southern California collaborated with  
38 local community members and artists to provide therapeutic art  
39 making for residents of Carpinteria, California, who were  
40 recovering from the effects of the Thomas Fire and subsequent

1 mud slides that took place between December 2017 and February  
2 2018. In the community of Thousand Oaks, California, local art  
3 therapists offered pro bono clinical art therapy sessions to  
4 individuals present at the mass shooting incident that took place  
5 at the Borderline Bar and Grill in 2018. These examples are a mere  
6 sample of the contributions made every day to California  
7 communities by professional art therapists; and

8 WHEREAS, Art therapists affirm a commitment to inclusivity,  
9 embrace all people, and honor each individual’s race, ethnicity,  
10 religious or spiritual beliefs, national origin, ancestry, age, abilities,  
11 sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, socioeconomic,  
12 marital, immigration, or military status, political affiliation, and  
13 new cultural identities as they emerge; and

14 WHEREAS, Art therapists advocate for the dignity, self-worth,  
15 well-being, and creative potential of all people. Art therapists  
16 maintain awareness of the social and environmental consequences  
17 of human actions on the communities, ecosystems, and associations  
18 that they interact with. Art therapists strive to advance a sustainable  
19 and just society; and

20 WHEREAS, Art therapists uphold social justice and  
21 sustainability through inclusion, awareness, practice, and the  
22 affirmation that all people deserve economic, environmental, health  
23 care, political, and social rights and opportunities; and

24 WHEREAS, October is an especially fitting month to appreciate  
25 the field of art therapy because it is Mental Health Month, and the  
26 American Art Therapy Association will be hosting its national  
27 conference in San Diego; now, therefore, be it

28 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*  
29 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature of the State of California  
30 hereby recognizes the week of October 10, 2021, to October 16,  
31 2021, inclusive, and those dates annually thereafter, as California  
32 Art Therapy Week of Civic Engagement to commemorate the  
33 contributions of professional art therapists to California’s  
34 communities; and be it further

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

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