

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Compassionate California
www.compassionatecalifornia.org

Charter for Compassion
www.charterforcompassion.org



California Passes Historic Declaration Becoming First “Compassionate” State in the Nation

The State of California has passed [Senate Concurrent Resolution \(SCR\) 18, titled “Compassionate California”](#). Introduced by Senator Dave Cortese (D-San Jose), the Resolution declares California to be the first Compassionate State in the United States of America. The Resolution unanimously passed both the State Senate (32-0) and Assembly (73-0) and became effective immediately upon filing with the Secretary of State.

SCR 18 has 68 official coauthors: Assemblymembers Aguiar-Curry, Arambula, Bauer-Kahan, Bigelow, Bloom, Boerner Horvath, Bryan, Burke, Calderon, Carrillo, Cervantes, Chau, Chiu, Choi, Cooley, Cooper, Cunningham, Megan Dahle, Davies, Flora, Fong, Frazier,

Friedman, Gabriel, Gallagher, Cristina Garcia, Eduardo Garcia, Gipson, Lorena Gonzalez, Gray, Holden, Irwin, Jones-Sawyer, Kalra, Lackey, Levine, Maienschein, Mathis, Mayes, Medina, Mullin, Muratsuchi, Nazarian, O'Donnell, Patterson, Petrie-Norris, Quirk, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Rendon, Reyes, Luz Rivas, Robert Rivas, Rodriguez, Blanca Rubio, Salas, Santiago, Seyarto, Stone, Ting, Valladares, Villapudua, Voepel, Waldron, Ward, Akilah Weber, Wicks, and Wood.

The [Charter for Compassion](#) was unveiled to the public in 2009 carrying forth the vision of creating a global civil society based upon the principle of compassion which lives at the heart of all religious, ethical, and spiritual traditions. Compassion impels us to alleviate the suffering of all creatures, care for our natural environment, and treat one another with dignity, equity, and respect. While SCR 18 is not an official adoption of the international Charter for Compassion, it does recognize the state as a model of compassion and proclaims California to be a Compassionate State.

“Our State is home to many industries, organizations, and individuals who seek to serve the needs of our communities through compassion, and it is through them that we have risen to be a model of compassion within the Union,” said Senator Cortese. *“When we lead with compassion, especially during times of increasing uncertainty, we generate positive benefits that ripple through every sector of our civic and community life.”*

Seventeen communities in California have passed “Compassionate Resolutions”, including the [County of Santa Clara](#), which adopted a Resolution introduced by Senator Cortese when he served on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. Numerous California communities have initiatives in process. Over 450 cities, counties, and states spread across 56 countries globally have already adopted or are actively advancing “Compassionate” community declarations.

Research demonstrates that practicing compassion produces positive benefits in all sectors of civic and community life, including

business, education, safety, public health, economic, and physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being.

“Compassion is at the heart of peace and harmony in community”, says Girish Shah of the Silicon Valley Interreligious Council and [Compassionate California](#), adding, *“This bipartisan resolution brings Compassion into the public square to build a more just and compassionate society.”*

“Declaring California as a Compassionate State helps us change the narrative for how we relate to each other and create community”, says Laura Hansen of Compassionate Capital Region and [Compassionate California](#), adding, *“Public health, safety and community design that serve everyone equitably are central to that narrative.”*

“The passing of this Resolution is highly significant as it lays further groundwork for policies advancing issues of inclusion, diversity, and equity”, says Marina Councilmember Dr. Lisa A. Berkley of [Compassionate California](#), adding, *“It lies at the intersection of positive psychology, social and environmental justice, and legislation and further establishes a foundation for policy rooted in care and compassion for the Earth and all her beings.”*

As the Resolution states, *“The state, along with its 58 counties and 482 cities, regularly empowers and supports compassionate programs and nonprofit services to improve the lives of all California residents and treat them with dignity, with emphasis on supportive services to child and youth programs, the elderly, the disabled, the homeless, veterans, immigrants, vulnerable and protected populations such as those defined by race, ethnicity, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation and identity, nativity, native language, and related issues, workers, and small businesses.”*

For more information, contact Tara Sreekrishnan, Office of Senator Dave Cortese, at 408 480 7833 or tara.sreekrishnan@sen.ca.gov.

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Senator Dave Cortese represents State Senate District 15 which encompasses most of Santa Clara County, including the cities of Campbell, Los Gatos, Cupertino, Saratoga, Monte Sereno, and much of San Jose, stretching from the Santa Cruz Mountains to the west and Mountain Hamilton Range to the east.