

Date of Hearing: June 27, 2018

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Patrick O'Donnell, Chair

SB 892 (Pan) – As Amended March 14, 2018

[Note: This bill was double referred to the Committee on Governmental Organization and was heard by that Committee with regard to issues in its jurisdiction.]

SENATE VOTE: 38-0

SUBJECT: Lunar New Year

SUMMARY: Requires the Governor to annually recognize the Lunar New Year and encourages all public schools and educational institutions to conduct exercises recognizing the traditions and cultural significance of the Lunar New Year, the contributions of Asian and Pacific Islander Californians to the state, and any local festivities and celebrations of the occasion. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) States that the date corresponding with the second new moon following the winter solstice of each year, or the third new moon following the winter solstice should an intercalary month intervene, is designated and set apart as the Lunar New Year, a day having special significance.
- 2) Encourages all public schools and educational institutions to conduct exercises recognizing the traditions and cultural significance of the Lunar New Year, the contributions of Asian and Pacific Islander Californians to the state, and any local festivities and celebrations of the occasion.
- 3) States the intent of the Legislature that the exercises encouraged in this section be integrated into the regular school program and be conducted by the public school or educational institution within the amount of time otherwise budgeted for educational programs.
- 4) Requires the Governor shall annually proclaim the date corresponding with the second new moon following the winter solstice, or the third new moon following the winter solstice should an intercalary month intervene, as the Lunar New Year.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Designates a number of days as days of special significance to the public schools and educational institutions, and encourages them to observe that day and to conduct suitable commemorative exercises. Those recognizing individuals are John Muir Day (April 21), Harvey Milk Day (May 22), Fred Korematsu Day (January 30), Ronald Reagan Day (February 6), and Ed Roberts Day (January 23).
- 2) Requires public schools to close on a number of holidays, including January 1, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Lincoln Day, Washington Day, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, December 25, all days appointed by the Governor or the President of the United States for a public fast, thanksgiving or holiday, and any other day designated as a holiday by the governing board of the school district.

- 3) Requires, for some specified holidays for which schools are required to close (Dr. Martin Luther King Day, Lincoln Day, Washington Day), that schools conduct exercises in commemoration.
- 4) Authorizes public schools to close on two other days if the governing board, pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement, agrees to close schools for that purpose. These days are César Chávez (March 31) and Native American Day (fourth Friday in September).
- 5) Requires public schools to remain open on specified days (unless otherwise closed to mark a holiday by decision of the governing board), and to celebrate the significance of those days with appropriate commemorative exercises. These days are the anniversary of the adoption of the U.S. Constitution, the birthdays of Luther Burbank (March 7) and Susan B. Anthony (February 15), and the death of Crispus Attucks (March 5).
- 6) Requires the State Board of Education to ensure that state curriculum on César Chávez and the history of the farm labor movement in the United States include information on the role of immigrants, including Filipino Americans, in that movement.
- 7) Designates October 25th of each year as Larry Itliong Day, a day of special significance, and requires the Governor to annually proclaim October 25th of each year as Larry Itliong Day. Encourages all public schools and educational institutions to observe this day and conduct exercises remembering the life and contributions of Larry Itliong.

FISCAL EFFECT: This bill is keyed non-fiscal.

COMMENTS:

Need for the bill. The author's office states, "Although Lunar New Year was established in the mid-1800s, it still has not received formal state-wide recognition. SB 892 is a big step forward in recognizing the importance of the contributions, such as Lunar New Year, made by API communities. As the most important holiday to many in Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities in California, SB 892 establishes Lunar New Year as a day of great significance to the state and encourages all schools to teach about its values and the many impacts made by API communities."

Lunar New Year's Day. The Lunar New Year typically occurs in late January or early February and is a significant cultural event for Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and some other Asian ethnic groups. The San Francisco Unified School District closes its schools in observance of the lunar new year, and in 2017 the New York City Department of Education did the same. This bill encourages, but does not require, public schools and educational institutions to conduct exercises celebrating the occasion.

Prior legislation. AB 2598 (Ting) of the 2015-16 Session would have encouraged all public schools and educational institutions to conduct culturally appropriate activities and exercises observing the Lunar New Year and requires the Governor to annually proclaim the date corresponding with the start of the lunar calendar as Lunar New Year's Day.

SB 616 (Huff and Nguyen) of the 2015-16 Session would have required the Governor, each year, to designate the date corresponding with the start of the Asian lunar calendar as Asian Lunar

New Year's Day, a day having special significance and encourage all public schools and educational institutions to conduct exercises observing the Asian Lunar New Year with appropriate activities and programs.

Recommended amendment. Staff recommends an amendment to avoid chaptering out another bill.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce
Chinese Chamber of Commerce
Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco

Opposition

None on file

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