

Date of Hearing: May 13, 2024

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON RULES
Blanca Pacheco, Chair
HR 97 (Zbur) – As Introduced April 23, 2024

SUBJECT: Harvey Milk Day.

SUMMARY: Commemorates May 22, 2024, as Harvey Milk Day and recognizes the pioneering contributions of Harvey Milk to the cause of LGBTQ+ civil rights. Specifically, **this resolution** makes the following legislative findings:

- 1) Harvey Bernard Milk was born on May 22, 1930, in Woodmere, New York. He was the first openly gay man to be elected to public office in a major city of the United States. Perhaps more than any other modern figure, Harvey Milk's life and political career embody the rise of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ+) civil rights movement in California, across the nation, and throughout the world.
- 2) In 1972, Harvey Milk moved with his partner, Scott Smith, to San Francisco, California and opened a camera shop called Castro Camera. He soon emerged as a community leader in the Castro neighborhood of San Francisco, founding the Castro Valley Association of Local Merchants, and representing that association's interests before city government.
- 3) Harvey Milk unsuccessfully ran for the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco in 1973, and unsuccessfully ran for the Assembly in 1975. With each race, he gained more prominence and eventually became known endearingly by his neighbors as the "Mayor of Castro Street."
- 4) After San Francisco adopted a district election system in 1977, Harvey Milk was elected to the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco representing District 5. It was the first time in the history of the United States that an openly gay man was elected to a prominent political office. During his term on the board of supervisors, Harvey Milk sponsored and successfully passed a gay rights ordinance.
- 5) Harvey Milk was instrumental in defeating Proposition 6, commonly known as the Briggs Initiative, at the General Election on November 7, 1978, that would have banned gays and lesbians from teaching in the public schools of this state.
- 6) Harvey Milk was also successful in forging coalitions with San Francisco's other minority leaders. His message was one of unity against oppression in all its forms. During a Gay Freedom Day speech, he said, "I call upon all minorities and especially the millions of lesbians and gay men to wake up from their dreams ... to gather on Washington and tell ... their nation: 'Wake up ... wake up, America ... no more racism, no more sexism, no more ageism, no more hatred ... no more.'"
- 7) In 1978, Dan White, who represented District 8 on the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco, resigned from his seat due to financial hardship, thus allowing the Mayor of San Francisco, George Moscone, to appoint a successor. Dan White later asked Mayor Moscone to be reappointed to his seat. Mayor Moscone declined after having been

lobbied by several city leaders, including Harvey Milk, who often clashed with Dan White due to their political differences.

- 8) On November 27, 1978, Dan White went to San Francisco City Hall to meet with Mayor Moscone and make a final plea for reappointment. When the mayor declined the request, Dan White shot and killed Mayor Moscone, then went to Harvey Milk's office and also shot and killed him.
- 9) Thousands attended a spontaneous candlelight memorial vigil the night of Harvey Milk's funeral. Harvey Milk had anticipated the possibility of assassination and had recorded several audio tapes to be played in that event. One of the tapes included his now famous quote, "If a bullet should enter my brain, let that bullet destroy every closet door."
- 10) Harvey Milk's legacy as a civil rights leader is still felt today. He was named one of TIME Magazine's most influential people of the 20th century. Many institutions and organizations are named for Harvey Milk, including the Harvey Milk Recreational Arts Center, the Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy, the Harvey Milk Institute, the Eureka Valley/Harvey Milk Memorial Branch Library, and the Harvey Milk Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender Democratic Club in San Francisco.
- 11) Harvey Milk's life and social contributions have left an indelible mark on the history of our nation and hold a special meaning for the people of California.

FISCAL EFFECT: This resolution is keyed non-fiscal by Legislative Counsel.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Michael Erke / RLS. / (916) 319-2800