

- 2) States that California proudly has over 10,000,000 immigrant residents, with Latino individuals and families making up nearly one-half of that population, whose invaluable contributions strengthen our communities, drive our economy, and are integral to the cultural and social fabric of the State of California
- 3) Reaffirms California's commitment to fostering and enhancing relations with Mexico, while acknowledging that Mexico stands as a partner with California in trade, tourism, cultural exchange, and many other areas, with our economic partnership supporting tens of thousands of California jobs and driving prosperity on both sides of the border.
- 4) States that the County of Kern is exceptionally positioned to further cultivate and strengthen the connection and enduring friendship between California and Mexico with its approximately 56.6 percent Latino residents, therefore, the Legislature supports the establishment of a Mexican Consulate in the County of Kern, which will further strengthen our binational relationship and empower our immigrant communities, as a testament to the enduring partnership between California and Mexico.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown. This resolution is not keyed fiscal by Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS:

1. **Purpose.** This resolution is Author-sponsored. The Author states, "Kern County is home to a vibrant, growing Latino community representing over 56% of its population, yet residents are forced to travel hours to Los Angeles or Fresno for basic consular services. ACR 164 is a statement of commitment from the California Legislature that our immigrant communities deserve local, accessible support. Not endless miles on the road and money spent on gas for a passport or legal protection. California and Mexico share more than two centuries of cultural, economic, and social history. This is not a new relationship; it is a foundational partnership, active every single day through trade, collaboration, and education that benefits both sides of the border. A Mexican Consulate in Kern County would be life-changing, providing residents with consular IDs, passports, legal advocacy, and connections to critical resources, while reducing the burden on working families who can no longer afford to be ignored. With over 10 million immigrant residents statewide, California cannot and will not leave its communities without a safety net or a voice. ACR makes that crystal clear."
2. **Background. *Role of Consulate Offices.*** Consulate offices provide access to consular identifications, passports, and vital records – such as birth and marriage certificates – documents that are essential for obtaining employment and accessing services. Additionally, consulate offices provide access to legal services. For Mexican nationals and dual citizens, navigating complex immigration and labor issues, having legal protection and advocacy close to home is critical.

Kern County. Kern County has approximately 900,000 residents, with a Latino population of about 56.6 percent, or roughly 500,000 people. The consulate offices closest to Kern County are Fresno, Los Angeles, and Oxnard, each of which exceed 100 miles from the county seat and population center of Bakersfield. The distance

can make accessing consulate services difficult, if not impossible, for some.

There are currently 10 Mexican Consulates in California, located in Calexico, Douglas, Fresno, Los Angeles, Oxnard, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, and Santa Ana.

The Author states a Mexican Consulate in Kern County would serve as a resource hub, connecting residents to educational, cultural, and economic programs offered by the Mexican government, reaffirming California's independent commitment to its relationship with Mexico and to its Latino residents.

SUPPORT AND OPPOSITION:

Support:

None received

Opposition:

None received

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