

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

ACR 210 (Jackson)

As Introduced May 21, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

This measure invites the Province of Gauteng, South Africa, to establish a sister-state relationship with California. It promotes stronger collaboration between the two regions and encourages universities, research institutions, and public agencies to develop new partnerships and agreements in areas of shared interest.

Major Provisions**COMMENTS**

This resolution recognizes the Province of Gauteng, South Africa, as the country's leading economic region and proposes a formal sister-state partnership between California and Gauteng to strengthen cooperation in areas of shared interest. The measure highlights Gauteng's significant economic influence, noting that it generates approximately one-third of South Africa's gross domestic product and serves as a major center for finance, innovation, manufacturing, and international trade. With a population of roughly 15 million people and more than 312.5 billion rand (\$18.6 billion) in new investment commitments in 2025, Gauteng continues to attract substantial growth across technology, manufacturing, logistics, green energy, and real estate sectors.

The resolution emphasizes the many similarities between California and Gauteng, particularly their leadership in technology, clean energy, advanced manufacturing, research, higher education, and creative industries. Both regions are home to globally recognized universities, innovation ecosystems, and internationally connected economies, making them natural partners for collaboration.

The measure further highlights Gauteng's strategic importance as a gateway to African markets. Through its Special Economic Zones, expanding data center infrastructure, and leadership role in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), Gauteng offers California businesses, universities, and institutions valuable opportunities to expand engagement throughout Africa. These economic advantages position Gauteng as a key partner for investment, trade, scientific research, and technological cooperation.

A significant foundation for this relationship already exists through a memorandum of understanding between California State University, Sacramento and the Province of Gauteng. This agreement demonstrates ongoing collaboration on academic and social priorities and serves as a model for broader institutional partnerships between California and Gauteng. The resolution recognizes that meaningful people-to-people and institution-to-institution relationships are already being developed and can be further strengthened.

The resolution also acknowledges Gauteng's historical and social significance. As a central location in South Africa's transition away from apartheid, Gauteng has contributed to

internationally respected efforts in truth and reconciliation, restorative justice, and community healing. These experiences are identified as valuable resources for California as it continues to advance equity, inclusion, and justice initiatives.

Additionally, both California and Gauteng share commitments to addressing major global challenges, including climate change, sustainable development, workforce preparation, economic inclusion, and reducing inequality. The resolution notes that both governments seek to create resilient economies that expand opportunity and improve quality of life for their residents.

As a result, the California Legislature formally extends an invitation to the people and government of Gauteng to establish a sister-state relationship with California. The proposed partnership would focus on economic development, innovation, education, sustainability, cultural exchange, and other areas of mutual benefit.

The resolution further encourages the expansion of existing partnerships and calls upon California universities, research institutions, and public agencies to pursue additional agreements and collaborative initiatives with Gauteng-based counterparts. Areas identified for future cooperation include workforce development, public health, climate resilience, technology transfer, equity advancement, and social justice. Through these efforts, the resolution seeks to create lasting educational, economic, scientific, and cultural ties that benefit both California and Gauteng while strengthening connections between the United States and Africa.

According to the Author

"Gauteng Province is South Africa's economic engine, generating roughly one-third of the nation's GDP, attracting billions in annual investment, and serving as the financial and innovation hub of sub-Saharan Africa. It is a region that shares our values on climate resilience, equity, and inclusive economic growth, and it is already home to partnerships with California institutions like Sacramento State University. Yet without a formal state-level framework, these connections remain isolated and underutilized."

"ACR 210 changes that. By establishing a sister state relationship between California and Gauteng, we create an official foundation for collaboration that benefits our businesses, our universities, our workers, and our communities. We open doors for California companies to access one of the continent's most investment-ready economies. We strengthen academic and research ties that expand opportunities for our students. And we signal clearly that California sees Africa not as a distant concern, but as a vital partner in building the future we all want to see."

Arguments in Support

None on file.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

None.

VOTES

UPDATED

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