

Introduced by Senator McPherson

February 22, 2002

An act to add Section 5079.53 to the Public Resources Code, relating to historical resources.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 2084, as introduced, McPherson. Historical resources: California missions.

Existing law provides for the preservation protection of historical resources in the state.

This bill would create the California Missions Preservation Fund in the State Treasury, and would require that moneys in the fund, upon appropriation by the Legislature, be used by the Department of Parks and Recreation, in consultation with the California Missions Foundation, for specified purposes relating to the preservation, restoration, and protection of California's historical missions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
- 2 following:
- 3 (a) On July 16, 1769, Alta California's first Mission, San Diego
- 4 de Alcalá, was founded by Father Junipero Serra at San Diego and
- 5 over the next 54 years Spanish settlers and native Californians
- 6 would endeavor to construct 21 missions along the El Camino
- 7 Real, concluding with the construction of Mission San Francisco

1 Solano, the last Alta California mission, which was founded by
2 Father Jose de Altimira on July 4, 1823.

3 (b) Because the Spanish friars and native peoples joined
4 together in the building of these settlements, the State of California
5 has been indelibly shaped and influenced by what they
6 accomplished in that most ambitious undertaking. From the
7 vineyards of Sonoma to the ranches of Santa Barbara to the adobe
8 arcades and red tile roofs of San Diego, the missions have left their
9 mark on who we are and what we have become.

10 (c) The missions of California are California’s most visited
11 historical attractions, and attract over 5 million visitors annually.
12 If the California Missions are to be preserved, it is important that
13 the state act now to ensure that the rich legacy of mission history
14 is preserved for future generations.

15 (d) In 1888, Miss Tessa L. Kelso, librarian of Los Angeles City
16 Library, founded the Association for the Preservation of the
17 Missions, which was the first serious effort toward preserving the
18 Alta California missions. Over a century later, a similar effort has
19 been undertaken by the nonprofit, nonsectarian California
20 Missions Foundation to address the urgent need for repair and
21 restoration of the missions.

22 (e) The list of potential preservation and restoration projects is
23 as diverse as the backgrounds of the people who originally built the
24 California missions, and those treasures are important to us all, as
25 is the information gleaned from archaeological excavation and
26 study.

27 SEC. 2. Section 5079.53 is added to the Public Resources
28 Code, to read:

29 5079.53. The California Missions Preservation Fund is
30 hereby created in the State Treasury, and moneys in the fund upon
31 appropriation by the Legislature, shall be used by the department,
32 in consultation with the California Missions Foundation, for
33 purposes including, but not limited to, structural repairs,
34 restoration, retrofitting and deferred maintenance of the 21
35 California missions, and the preservation of priceless artworks and
36 artifacts, statues, songbooks, and manuscripts contained therein.

