

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 91

Senator Runestad offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to recognize the historic, cultural, and
2 religious significance of the festival of Diwali.

3 Whereas, Diwali is celebrated annually every autumn by Hindus,
4 Sikhs, and Jains in Michigan, the United States, and throughout the
5 world, with over one billion celebrants marking the holiday; and

6 Whereas, Diwali is a holy day, during which celebrants light
7 small oil lamps and place them around the home. The lighting of the
8 lamps is followed by prayers for attainment of health, wealth,
9 knowledge, peace, and valor, and is recognized as the beginning of
10 a new year for some Hindus; and

11 Whereas, "Diwali" is a shortened version of the Sanskrit word
12 "Deepavali", which means a row of lamps, and in English is referred

1 to as the "festival of lights;" and

2 Whereas, Celebrants of Diwali believe that the rows of lamps
3 symbolize the light within the individual that rids the soul of the
4 darkness of ignorance; and

5 Whereas, For Hindus, Diwali is a celebration of the belief
6 that light triumphs over darkness and good triumphs over evil; and

7 Whereas, For Sikhs, Diwali is feted as the day that the sixth
8 founding Sikh Guru, or revered teacher, Guru Hargobind, was
9 released from captivity by the Mughal Emperor Jehangir; and

10 Whereas, For Jains, Diwali marks the anniversary of the
11 attainment of moksha or liberation by Lord Mahavira, the last of
12 the Tirthankaras, who were the great teachers of Jain Dharma at the
13 end of his life in 527 B.C.; and

14 Whereas, Michigan remains resolute in its commitment to
15 continue fostering diversity of experience and religious
16 acceptance; and

17 Whereas, Diwali is a time marked by qualities of togetherness,
18 family, and community; now, therefore, be it

19 Resolved by the Senate, That the members of this legislative
20 body recognize the historic, cultural, and religious significance
21 of the festival of Diwali. We recognize the Diwali message of
22 tolerance, compassion, and acceptance of others which resonates
23 with the ideals of the American spirit; and be it further

24 Resolved, That we express respect and admiration to all those
25 who celebrate Diwali throughout the world and in our own
26 communities.