

RESOLUTION 2026-_____

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF LASSEN SUPPORTING ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 23 (GALLAGHER) FOR THE FORMATION OF A NEW STATE

WHEREAS, the County of Lassen, located in Northern California, has long been a rural community with unique economic, cultural, and geographic interests, including agriculture, forestry, tourism, and recreation, which are often overlooked by urban-centered policies in Sacramento; and

WHEREAS, Lassen County, with a population of over 30,000 residents, contributes significantly to California's economy through its natural resources, including Eagle Lake and the surrounding forests; and

WHEREAS, Lassen County residents have actively advocated for greater regional autonomy, reflecting the county's desire for more responsive governance to address rural needs such as wildfire prevention and resource management; and

WHEREAS, Lassen County residents have historically expressed frustration with the lack of representation in state government, where decisions on critical issues such as water rights, wildfire prevention, and resource management are dominated by politicians from densely populated coastal areas like Los Angeles and San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, Proposition 50 (2025), which the Board of Supervisors of Lassen County unanimously opposes, is the latest example of the disenfranchisement of rural areas by proposing changes to congressional redistricting processes that will further dilute rural voices and consolidate influence in urban districts; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Joint Resolution 23 (AJR 23), introduced by Assemblymember Gallagher and co-authored by 7 legislators, including Assemblymember Hadwick and Senator Dahle, as amended on September 13, 2025, expresses the consent of the California State Legislature for Lassen County and other specified counties—Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yuba, and any adjacent counties that vote to join—to form a new state from within the current boundaries of California, pursuant to Article IV, Section 3 of the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, historical efforts to divide California, including a voter-approved proposal in 1859, reflect a deep-rooted desire for more responsive governance. In recent years, counties such as Siskiyou, Modoc, and San Bernardino have expressed support for exploring secession to achieve equitable resource allocation and representation; and

WHEREAS, AJR 23 recognizes California's vast geographic and socio-economic diversity, with a population of nearly 40 million concentrated in urban coastal areas,

leading to inequities in representation and policy-making that disproportionately burden rural and inland regions like Lassen County; and

WHEREAS, the formation of a new state would empower Lassen County and its neighboring counties, home to over 14 million residents, to govern themselves more effectively, fostering policies that prioritize local needs such as water security, economic development, and wildfire resilience, while preserving existing county, city, and town boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of Lassen County believes that supporting AJR 23 aligns with the principles of self-determination, federalism, and equitable representation, and would create a more responsive government for the residents of Lassen County and the proposed new state; and

WHEREAS, the Board urges the California Legislature to approve AJR 23, expressing the legislature’s consent for the formation of a new state; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Lassen hereby expresses its strong support for Assembly Joint Resolution 23 (Gallagher) and the formation of a new state comprising Lassen County and the other counties specified therein.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted at a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the county of Lassen, State of California, held on the _____ day of _____, 20____ by the following vote:

AYES: _____

NOES: _____

ABSTAIN: _____

ABSENT: _____

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LASSEN, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

ATTEST:
JULIE BUSTAMANTE
Clerk of the Board

BY: _____

MICHELE YDERRAGA, Deputy Clerk of the Boa

I, MICHELE YDERRAGA, Deputy Clerk of the Board of the Board of Supervisors, County of Lassen, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the said Board of Supervisors at a regular meeting thereof held on the ____ day of _____, 20____.

Deputy Clerk of the County of Lassen
Board of Supervisors

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY SEPTEMBER 13, 2025

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2025–26 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 23

Introduced by Assembly Member Gallagher
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Castillo, Hadwick, Lackey,
Macedo, Patterson, and Sanchez)
(Coauthor: Senator Dahle)

August 26, 2025

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 23—Relative to new state formation.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 23, as amended, Gallagher. New state formation.

This measure would express the consent of the Legislature for specified counties to form a new state from within the current boundaries of the State of California, and would urge Congress to accept and embrace that consent.

Fiscal committee: yes.

1 WHEREAS, California, the most populous state in the nation,
2 has nearly ~~six~~ 6 times the average population of the 50 states.
3 However, this population is highly concentrated in certain urban
4 and coastal areas, particularly in southern California; and
5 WHEREAS, As the nation's third largest state by geography,
6 California spans an area more than twice the size of the average
7 state. Its diverse economy encompasses agriculture, energy,
8 technology, and entertainment, making it one of the most
9 economically complex regions in the country; and
10 WHEREAS, The socio-economic diversity and population
11 distribution have contributed to difficulties in achieving equitable

1 political representation. This has resulted in vast regions of the
2 state being underserved by a government heavily influenced by
3 elected representatives from a small, geographically and
4 economically distinct part of the state; and

5 WHEREAS, Efforts to divide California are deeply rooted in
6 its history, dating back more than a century. Notably, in 1859,
7 voters overwhelmingly approved splitting the state into two.
8 However, Congress did not act on this proposal due to the Civil
9 War; and

10 WHEREAS, In the last decade, several counties in northern
11 California, including ~~Siskiyou, Modoc, Glenn, Sutter, Yuba, and~~
12 ~~Tehama~~, *Glenn, Modoc, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, and Yuba* have
13 expressed the desire to participate in, and voters from other
14 counties have expressed their support for the formation of, a new
15 state from within the current boundaries of the State of California;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Most recently in 2022, the County of San
18 Bernardino passed a measure that expressed their support of having
19 the elected representatives of the county “research and advocate
20 for all methods (including secession from the state) for receiving
21 an equitable share of state funding and resources”; and

22 WHEREAS, The citizens of northern California and inland
23 regions have long been frustrated at being subjected to laws and
24 regulations that they and their representatives have overwhelmingly
25 opposed, but were nonetheless passed and authorized by the more
26 populous coastal regions of California; and

27 WHEREAS, The right of a people to self-determination through
28 the creation of a new state has long been a fundamental principle
29 of American democracy and is consistent with the principles of
30 federalism as outlined in the United States Constitution; and

31 WHEREAS, Dividing California into two smaller states would
32 better serve the citizens by fostering governance that is more
33 responsive and representative. The historical boundaries of existing
34 counties, cities, and towns would be preserved in this process; and

35 WHEREAS, Creating two states would generate competition
36 in governance, leading to more efficient, effective, and responsive
37 state governments for all citizens; now, therefore, be it

38 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*
39 *California, jointly*, That the Legislature of the State of California
40 expresses its consent, as described in Section 3 of Article IV of

1 the United States Constitution, for the County of Alpine, County
2 of Amador, County of Butte, County of Calaveras, County of
3 Colusa, County of Del Norte, County of El Dorado, County of
4 Fresno, County of Glenn, County of Imperial, County of Inyo,
5 County of Kern, County of Kings, County of ~~Lassen~~. *Lassen*,
6 County of Madera, County of Mariposa, County of Merced, County
7 of Modoc, County of Mono, County of Nevada, *County of Orange*,
8 County of Placer, County of Plumas, County of Riverside, County
9 of San Bernardino, County of San Joaquin, County of Shasta,
10 County of Sierra, County of Siskiyou, County of Stanislaus, County
11 of Sutter, County of Tehama, County of Trinity, County of Tulare,
12 County of Tuolumne, County of Yuba, and any adjacent counties
13 that vote to join the aforementioned counties, to form a new state
14 from within the current boundaries of the State of California; and
15 be it further

16 *Resolved*, That the Legislature of the State of California urges
17 Congress to accept and embrace the consent provided by
18 Legislature of the State of California for those counties to form a
19 new state from within the current boundaries of the State of
20 California; and be it further

21 ~~*Resolved*~~, *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly
22 transmit copies of this resolution to the President and the Vice
23 President of the United States, the Speaker of the United States
24 House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the United States
25 Senate, each Senator and Representative from California in the
26 Congress of the United States, the Governor, and the author for
27 appropriate distribution.

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AJR 23: New State Formation

SUMMARY

AJR 23 seeks to address long-standing concerns regarding equitable representation and governance across California's diverse regions, particularly in northern and inland communities. As the nation's most populous state and one of its largest geographically, California faces inherent challenges in ensuring balanced representation. Population concentration in coastal and urban centers has contributed to a growing perception among many counties that their unique needs and priorities are underrepresented in statewide decision-making.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Efforts to explore new governance structures are not new. Historical attempts, including an 1859 voter-approved proposal, reflect an enduring interest in more localized and responsive governance. In recent years, several counties have taken formal steps to examine or express support for greater autonomy as a means of improving representation and resource allocation.

California's size, population, and economic diversity have long contributed to regional differences in policy priorities and political representation. Rural and Northern California communities, in particular, have expressed concerns that statewide decision-making is disproportionately influenced by large urban centers, leading to policies that may not align with local economic drivers such as agriculture, forestry, and resource management. These concerns have persisted across multiple policy areas, including water allocation, land use, energy, and taxation.

Concerns about representation have also been heightened with the passage of Proposition 50. Proposition 50 reduced representation combining rural inland areas with coastal urban communities. The new map produced districts that dilute rural voting power by combining geographically large and demographically distinct regions. For communities already concerned about limited influence in

Sacramento, redistricting outcomes have reinforced perceptions that their representation is structurally constrained.

SOLUTION

AJR 23 proposes a pathway for addressing regional governance concerns by expressing legislative consent for the formation of a new state, consisting of the inland counties of the state. The resolution grants consent to these counties' constituents, consistent with the requirements outlined in Article IV of the U.S. Constitution. This includes the need for approval by the United States Congress before any new state could be formed.

By taking this step, AJR 23 provides a structured and lawful mechanism to explore state division as a potential solution to longstanding regional disparities. It encourages dialogue among stakeholders, including local governments, residents, and federal representatives, while ensuring that any future action would occur through a transparent and constitutionally grounded process. The resolution serves as an initial step toward evaluating whether a new governance model could better meet the needs of affected communities.

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

"California is a vast and diverse state, but too often the voices of rural and Northern communities are overshadowed by the priorities of large urban centers. AJR 23 is about acknowledging those concerns and giving these regions a meaningful opportunity to explore whether a different governance structure would better serve their residents. This resolution does not divide the state—it starts a conversation that is long overdue."

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