



County of Monterey

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS RESOLUTION

Resolution No.: 25-307
Resolution Celebrating the 175th Anniversary of California Statehood and the
Historic Role of Monterey County in the Founding of the Golden State.....)

WHEREAS, On September 9, 1850, California was officially admitted to the Union as the 31st state of the United States of America, following the signing of the Compromise of 1850 by U.S. President Millard Fillmore; and

WHEREAS, This year marks the 175th Anniversary of California Statehood, a milestone that invites reflection on the state's diverse origins, including the millennia-long presence of Native California tribes, who stewarded the land and waters of present-day California since time immemorial, and whose enduring cultures and sovereignty remain vital to the fabric of our state; and

WHEREAS, Monterey County was once the homeland of the Rumsen and Esselen Ohlone, Amah Mutsun and Salinan peoples, among many other Indigenous nations throughout California, who made profound contributions to the region's history and cultural legacy; and

WHEREAS, The City of Monterey holds a unique place in the state's founding, having served as the capital of Alta California under both Spanish and Mexican rule, where civic, military, and religious life flourished through institutions such as Colton Hall, the Presidio of Monterey, San Carlos Cathedral and the Custom House, the oldest public building in California and State Historical Landmark No. 1; and

WHEREAS, It was in Monterey's Colton Hall in September and October of 1849 that 48 delegates from across California gathered for the California Constitutional Convention, which included several Californios, such as Don Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, Antonio Maria Pico, Jose Antonio Carrillo and Pablo De La Guerra, who advocated for civil rights, bilingual governance, and cultural inclusion; and

WHEREAS, The resulting California Constitution of 1849, drafted and signed in Monterey in both English and Spanish, established the foundation for California's governance, enshrined civil liberties, and expressly prohibited slavery, setting the state apart during a time of deep national division. The Constitution states, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, unless for punishment of crimes, shall ever be tolerated in this State"; and

WHEREAS, William Edward Petty Hartnell, known as Don Guillermo Arnel, was the official translator of the California Constitution into Spanish, and due in part to his efforts, California initially recognized Spanish as an official language alongside English. For the first 30 years, all California state laws were required to be translated in both languages; and

WHEREAS, After the Constitution's ratification by California voters on November 13, 1849 with 94 percent in favor (12,061 in favor and 811 against), the newly formed state government that convened on December 17, 1849, immediately petitioned the U.S. Congress for admission and in March 1850, California Senators John C. Fremont and William M. Gwin, along with State Representatives Edward Gilbert and George W. Wright, personally submitted copies in Washington D.C. of the new California Constitution and requested, "In the name of the people of California, the admission of the State of California into the American Union"; and

WHEREAS, On January 29, 1850, California Statehood was introduced as part of the Compromise of 1850 by U.S. Senator Henry Clay, leading to the introduction of the California Statehood Act (S. 169), also known as the California Admission Act, and approved 34-18 in the Senate on August 13, 1850 and 150-56 in the House of Representatives on September 7, 1850, later culminating in California's entry as a free state by the signing of the legislation by the President Millard Fillmore on September 9, 1850; and

WHEREAS, Monterey County is proudly recognized as one of the original 27 counties established in the State of California by the first State Legislature on February 18, 1850, affirming Monterey County's foundational role in California's early statehood and governance; and

WHEREAS, Monterey County's historic role in California's path to statehood is a lasting source of pride, and the preservation of Colton Hall, where the Constitution was written, stands as a symbol of democratic ideals and the multi-cultural and multi-lingual roots of California's founding; and

WHEREAS, The 175th Anniversary of Statehood is a time to recognize not only the governmental institutions that were born in Monterey, but also the diverse peoples, Native American, Spanish and Mexican Californios, immigrants, and settlers, who laid the foundation for California's identity, values, and enduring pursuit of justice and opportunity.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors, on behalf of the County and all residents thereof, hereby commemorates the 175th Anniversary of California Statehood and proudly honors the historic and foundational role Monterey County played in convening the 1849 Constitutional Convention, drafting California's first Constitution, and petitioning for admission as the 31st state of the Union; and further declares Monterey County as the "Birthplace of the California Constitution."

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that County of Monterey reaffirms its commitment to the preservation of historical sites, the recognition of the significant contributions of Monterey County's diverse people, and the education of future generations on the shared values of freedom, cultural diversity, and democratic governance that define California today.

PASSED AND ADOPTED on this 26th day of August 2025

Chair Supervisor Chris Lopez

Vice Chair Supervisor Wendy Root Askew

Supervisor Glenn Church

Supervisor Luis A. Alejo

Supervisor Kate Daniels

