

1 A RESOLUTION recognizing Simmons College of Kentucky's fifth annual *Race to*
2 *Greatness: A Celebration of the Black Jockeys of the Kentucky Derby*.

3 WHEREAS, since 2018, Simmons College of Kentucky, the only private
4 Historically Black College or University in Kentucky, has celebrated the rich history,
5 spirit, and accomplishments of the Black jockeys of the Kentucky Derby. This year's
6 event will take place on Race to Greatness Day, which will be celebrated on April 23,
7 2023; and

8 WHEREAS, this annual event was created to educate the community on this
9 invaluable history. Under the leadership of President Kevin W. Cosby, Vice President
10 Von Purdy, and their team, this event has become popular during Derby season, one that
11 brings the history of the Black jockeys' contributions and the Black community to the
12 forefront; and

13 WHEREAS, the history of the Kentucky Derby and the Black horseman are
14 forever intertwined. The Kentucky Derby and Churchill Downs owe a great deal to those
15 who helped shape America's greatest horse race. Thirteen of the 15 riders in the first
16 Kentucky Derby were Black, and Black reinsmen won 15 of the first 28 runnings of the
17 Kentucky Derby; and

18 WHEREAS, despite inequalities, pioneering jockeys exemplified love for the sport,
19 the pursuit of excellence, and the perseverance it takes to be a Derby winner; and

20 WHEREAS, Simmons College of Kentucky has named this event, *Race to*
21 *Greatness: A Celebration of the Black Jockeys of the Kentucky Derby*, and holds it in
22 conjunction with corporate and community partners who value this illustrious history;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Simmons College of Kentucky honors this annual event every year on
25 the Sunday after the city of Louisville's annual fireworks display in April, in celebration
26 of this great history; and

27 WHEREAS, *Race to Greatness: A Celebration of the Black Jockeys of the*

1 *Kentucky Derby*, is an honorable and worthy historic event that uplifts and embeds this
2 event in the city of Louisville, Kentucky, home of the Kentucky Derby;

3 NOW, THEREFORE,

4 ***Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of***
5 ***Kentucky:***

6 ➔Section 1. The members of the Senate both individually and collectively
7 recognize the fifth annual *Race to Greatness: A Celebration of Black Jockeys of the*
8 *Kentucky Derby*, and salute Simmons College of Kentucky on its dedication to preserving
9 the rich history of Black jockeys.

10 ➔Section 2. When the Senate adjourns this day, it does so in honor and loving
11 memory of the eleven Black jockeys who have won the Kentucky Derby: Oliver Lewis,
12 Willie "Billy" Walker, George Garrett Lewis, Babe Hurd, Isaac Burns Murphy, Erskine
13 "Babe" Henderson, Isaac Lewis, Alonzo Clayton, James "Soup" Perkins, Willie Simms,
14 and Jimmy Winkfield.

15 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is hereby directed to transmit a copy of this
16 Resolution to Senator Gerald Neal for presentation.