

1 A RESOLUTION celebrating Black History Month.

2 WHEREAS, the European transatlantic slave trade, a segment of the global slave
3 trade, forcibly removed 12 to 16 million enslaved Africans and transported them to the
4 Americas and European possessions from the 16th century through its eventual outlawing
5 in the 19th century; and

6 WHEREAS, the first enslaved Africans to arrive in what would become the United
7 States were brought to the Spanish colony of St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565; and

8 WHEREAS, the oppression and exploitation of the Black community did not end
9 with the abolition of slavery and the passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to
10 the United States Constitution, as Southern states passed the racial segregation codes that
11 constituted the Jim Crow regime, enforced by white Southerners against their Black
12 counterparts through both state power and terroristic violence; and

13 WHEREAS, due to the heroic activism of Black community leaders and their allies,
14 the U.S. government began taking significant action against racial segregation in the
15 1950s and 1960s, culminating in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act
16 of 1965; and

17 WHEREAS, understanding Black history is critical to understanding the broader
18 narrative of the history of the United States; and

19 WHEREAS, the celebration of Black History Month originated in 1915 when Black
20 academics and activists led by Carter G. Woodson, who earned a bachelor's degree in
21 literature from Berea College, established the Association for the Study of Negro Life
22 and History; and

23 WHEREAS, Woodson and other Black leaders working with the Association for
24 the Study of Negro Life and History announced Negro History Week in February, 1926,
25 in order to popularize and celebrate the study of Black history and culture; and

26 WHEREAS, the movement to study and teach Black history grew across the United
27 States, resulting in President Gerald Ford recognizing the first national Black History

1 Month in February, 1976; and

2 WHEREAS, the Kentucky General Assembly recognizes the courage and lasting
3 influence of pioneering Black public servants such as former Governor Lawrence
4 Douglas Wilder of Virginia, who was elected the first Black governor of a U.S. state in
5 1990, former Senator Hiram Revels of Mississippi, who was elected the first Black U.S.
6 Senator in 1870, and former Representative Joseph Rainey of South Carolina, who was
7 elected the first Black member of the U.S. House of Representatives in 1870; and

8 WHEREAS, Black Kentuckians have played a critical role in the history and
9 leadership of our Commonwealth, overcoming great adversity to become leaders in our
10 political, academic, spiritual, artistic, and cultural experience; and

11 WHEREAS, one such influential Black Kentuckian was Charles W. Anderson, Jr.,
12 who became the first Black legislator elected in the South since Reconstruction when he
13 ran for and won a seat in the Kentucky House of Representatives in 1935, and spent his
14 tenure in office working to improve educational opportunities and better access to public
15 facilities for Black Kentuckians; and

16 WHEREAS, Georgia Davis Powers became the first woman and first person of
17 color elected to the Kentucky Senate in 1967. She spent her tenure in office championing
18 the Civil Rights movement as a strong supporter of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,
19 sponsoring legislation to improve educational opportunities for disabled Kentuckians, to
20 enact fair housing regulations, and to prohibit discrimination based on factors such as age
21 and sex; and

22 WHEREAS, Attorney General Daniel Cameron was elected the Commonwealth's
23 first Black Attorney General and the first elected Black statewide officer in 2019, and
24 was selected to speak at the 2020 Republican National Convention; and

25 WHEREAS, the Kentucky General Assembly is committed to the preservation and
26 recognition of Black history, recognizing its importance in our collective story;

27 NOW, THEREFORE,

1 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of*
2 *Kentucky:*

3 ➔Section 1. The members of the Senate, individually and collectively, hereby
4 celebrate and recognize February as Black History Month.

5 ➔Section 2. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
6 Resolution to Senator Donald Douglas.