

1 A RESOLUTION commemorating the 100th anniversary of Black History Month.

2 WHEREAS, Africans were first brought involuntarily to the shores of the United
3 States as early as the 17th century; and

4 WHEREAS, African Americans suffered enslavement and subsequently faced the
5 injustices of lynch mobs, segregation, and denial of the basic and fundamental rights of
6 citizenship; and

7 WHEREAS, in 2026, the vestiges of those injustices and inequalities remain
8 evident in the society of the United States; and

9 WHEREAS, even though race, and thus the designations of "negro," "Black,"
10 "colored," and "African American," has been recognized as a construct originally built to
11 separate and disenfranchise people based on skin color that was associated with people
12 originating from the African continent, there is a shared culture derived from that history
13 that should be seen and elevated; and

14 WHEREAS, every February, the United States acknowledges and honors that
15 African Americans, through their contributions and sacrifices, have played an indelible
16 role in shaping this country; and

17 WHEREAS, in 1915, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, known as the "father of Black
18 history," first set out to designate a time to promote and educate people about Black
19 history and culture, as he believed that history created by Black people, despite attempts
20 to limit their potential, is a critical part of American history; and

21 WHEREAS, Dr. Woodson had ties to the Commonwealth, working in the Kentucky
22 coal mines as a child. The son of former slaves, he enrolled in high school at the age of
23 20 and went on to graduate from Berea College with a bachelor's degree, received his
24 master's degree from the University of Chicago, and earned a Ph.D. from Harvard
25 University, where he was one of the first scholars to study African American history; and

26 WHEREAS, Dr. Woodson founded the organization now known as the Association
27 for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), galvanizing fellow

1 historians to envision a weeklong celebration to encourage the coordinated teaching of
2 Black history in public schools because it was not woven into the fabric of the American
3 history taught year-round; and

4 WHEREAS, in 1926, Dr. Woodson was successful in creating Negro History
5 Week, celebrated during the second week of February, as it coincided with the birthdays
6 of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, both of whom ensured emancipation; and

7 WHEREAS, Dr. Woodson believed that Negro History Week would not place
8 limitations on but would focus and broaden the nation's consciousness of the importance
9 of learning Black history and make the celebration of Black history in the academic field
10 of history a serious area of study; and

11 WHEREAS, by the late 1960s, due to demonstrations concerning racial injustice,
12 inequality, and poverty during the Civil Rights Movement, Negro History Week evolved
13 into what is now known as Black History Month; and

14 WHEREAS, calling upon Americans to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-
15 often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor
16 throughout our history," in 1976, President Gerald R. Ford officially recognized Black
17 History Month during the nation's bicentennial; and

18 WHEREAS, the ASALH celebrates its 111th anniversary this year and the 100th
19 anniversary of Negro History Week and consequently Black History Month. The theme
20 for the 2026 Black History Month is "A Century of Black History Commemorations";
21 and

22 WHEREAS, as part of the global African diaspora, people of African descent in the
23 United States have viewed their role in history as critical to their own development and
24 that of the world. Along with writing Black histories, Black scholars started observing the
25 milestones in the struggle of people of African descent to gain their freedom and equality.
26 Revealing their connection to the diaspora, they commemorated the Haitian Revolution,
27 the end of the slave trade, and the end of slavery in Jamaica. They observed American

1 emancipation with Watch Night, Jubilee Day, and Juneteenth celebrations. The scholar
2 Arthur A. Schomburg captured the motivation of Black people to dig up their own history
3 and present it to the world: "The American Negro must remake his past in order to make
4 his future" ; and

5 WHEREAS, in the face of injustices, people of good will and of all races in the
6 United States have distinguished themselves with a commitment to the noble ideals on
7 which the United States was founded and have fought courageously for the rights and
8 freedom of African Americans and others; and

9 WHEREAS, the contributions of African Americans from all walks of life
10 throughout the history of the United States reflect the greatness of the United States; and

11 WHEREAS, many African Americans lived, toiled, and died in obscurity, never
12 achieving the recognition those individuals deserved, and yet they paved the way for
13 future generations to succeed; and

14 WHEREAS, African Americans continue to serve the United States at the highest
15 levels of business, government, and the military; and

16 WHEREAS, during the month of February 2026, across the United States of
17 America and this great Commonwealth, observances are held to increase public
18 awareness of the importance of Black history and the contributions that African
19 Americans have made toward this country; and

20 WHEREAS, in 2026, the Kentucky Black Legislative Caucus and all Kentuckians
21 pause to recognize and reflect on the accomplishments African Americans have made in
22 this Commonwealth and across the nation throughout each year and throughout the
23 history of this nation, and in so doing we commemorate the 100th anniversary of Black
24 History Month; and

25 WHEREAS, we all recognize that Black history is American history; and

26 WHEREAS, not only during the month of February but throughout the year, it is
27 important that we know our history to beneficially meet the challenges of now, and, into

1 the future, we must understand what brought us to this moment; and

2 WHEREAS, the citizens of this great Commonwealth should recommit themselves
3 to an ideal America where equality and justice will always prevail, and to the principles
4 of love, wisdom, and compassion toward one another;

5 NOW, THEREFORE,

6 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the*
7 *Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

8 ➔Section 1. The members of the House of Representatives, individually and
9 collectively, hereby commemorate the 100th anniversary of Black History Month, and:

10 (1) Acknowledge that all people of this Commonwealth and the United States are
11 the recipients of the wealth of history provided by Black culture;

12 (2) Recognize the importance of Black history as an opportunity to reflect on the
13 complex history, while remaining hopeful and confident about the path ahead;

14 (3) Acknowledge the significance of Black history as an important opportunity to
15 commemorate the tremendous contributions of African Americans to the history of the
16 United States and this great Commonwealth;

17 (4) Encourage the celebration of Black history to provide a continuing
18 opportunity for all people to learn from the past and understand the experiences that have
19 shaped the United States and this great Commonwealth; and

20 (5) Move forward with purpose, united tirelessly as a nation "indivisible, with
21 liberty and justice for all."

22 ➔Section 2. The Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to transmit a
23 copy of this Resolution to Representative George Brown, the members of Kentucky's
24 congressional delegation, President Donald J. Trump, and Vice President J.D. Vance.