

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 95-4626, by Representatives Mason, Carlson, Valle, Dickerson, Conway, Elliot, Jacobsen, Hatfield, Ebersole, Dyer, Ogden, Cody, D. Schmidt, Veloria, Poulsen, Smith, Chopp and Costa

WHEREAS, The House of Representatives traditionally recognizes February as the celebration of the many contributions to America by African-Americans; and

WHEREAS, The American slave trade began on the Continent of Africa approximately 1490, and during the next 373 years more than 100 million Africans were objects of commerce and the foundation of America's present economic standing in the world; and

WHEREAS, During the period of the American slave trade, 15 million slaves died and remain buried in the middle passage between the shores of Africa and America; and

WHEREAS, More than 300,000 black men, women, and children fought, nursed, and assisted both the Union and Confederate armies during the Civil War; and the Emancipation Proclamation was signed by President Abraham Lincoln declaring January 1, 1863, as the date ending human bondage and the practice of labor without compensation in America; and

WHEREAS, Secular and religious education was of paramount importance to freed black Americans, and the first school for African-Americans was established in Hampton, Virginia in 1865. Today, 104 traditionally black colleges and universities that were established in the years following slavery still exist; and

WHEREAS, During Reconstruction, many African-Americans became prominent elected officials. Hiram Revels, a Republican from Mississippi, was the first black person to serve in the United States Senate in 1870; and South Carolina sent an all black delegation to Congress; and

WHEREAS, George Washington Bush was the first black to serve in the Washington Territorial Legislature, and Representatives Charles Stokes and Marjorie Pitter King were the first black man and woman to serve in the legislature following the proclamation of Washington statehood; and Charles Z. Smith was the first black, and only person of color, to serve on the Washington State Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, In the 40 years following slavery, southern states eliminated black competition at the ballot box by instituting grandfather clauses permitting citizens to vote only if their grandfather had exercised that right; and

WHEREAS, Booker T. Washington, founder of Tuskegee College, was the first African-American to connect academic education with industrial training. He left a legacy of a changed educational policy for all Americans; and

WHEREAS, The desire to succeed and contribute to America caused African-Americans to defy racial hostility, lynching, Jim Crow laws, and economic injustices; and

WHEREAS, This willingness to succeed and the love for their country has left a positive impact on American culture and society in areas of education, medicine, industry, the military, religion, social science, philosophy, agriculture, engineering, and the arts; and

WHEREAS, Just a few of the major contributions made by African-American scientists include: Dr. Charles Drew developed the first blood bank; Dr. Elmer Imes, a physicist, expanded the quantum theory to include the rotation status of the molecule; Dr. Percy Julian was the first to find uses for the soybean and applications for cortisone; and Archie Alexander engineered and built the bridge spanning the Potomac River; and

WHEREAS, The civil rights movement grew from the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott, inspired by Rosa Parks, and led by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The 1963 March on Washington brought together participants from all walks of American life to share in the spirit of equality; and

WHEREAS, There have been major contributions made to Washington State history by African-American citizens, including: Edwin T. Pratt, civil rights leader; Mona Lake Jones, poet; Sam Smith, political strategist; Jacob Lawrence and James Washington, artists; Esther Mumford, historian; and Quincy Jones, Ernestine Anderson, and Jimi Hendrix, musicians;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the state of Washington recognize the importance of the contributions made by African-Americans, and acknowledge that February is African-American History Month; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives to the Chair of the Washington State Commission on African-American Affairs, to Judge Charles Stokes, the first African-American member of the Washington State House of Representatives, and to Justice Charles Z. Smith of the Washington State Supreme Court.

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of
Resolution 4626 adopted by the House of Representatives
February 20, 1995.

Timothy A. Martin, Chief Clerk