

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO.2005-4614, by Representatives McCoy, Kenney, Wood, Santos, Conway, Condotta, Appleton, Clibborn, Miloscia, Lovick, Hunt, Blake, Pettigrew, Chase, Springer, B. Sullivan, Ormsby, Sells, Cody, Fromhold, Takko, Rodne, Ericksen, Skinner, Hankins, Pearson, Buri, Kirby, Orcutt, Quall, Kessler, Eickmeyer, Williams, Ericks, Haigh, Murray, Upthegrove, Roberts, Kilmer, Wallace, Darneille, Grant, Hasegawa, Linville, P. Sullivan, Bailey and Talcott

WHEREAS, Our nation was founded upon the notion that freedom and equality are inseparable; and

WHEREAS, The fight for freedom and equality is celebrated each February as our nation recognizes Black History Month; and

WHEREAS, Black Americans survived nearly 400 years of slavery and human bondage, earning their freedom with President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation only to face another century of segregation and discrimination in the South; and

WHEREAS, In February 1926, Carter G. Woodson founded Black History Month in the hope that Americans would learn about forgotten chapters of our nation's history and develop mutual respect for people of all colors, races, and creeds; and

WHEREAS, As a free state, Washington became home to many black pioneers, including Civil War veterans like William Stewart and leaders like George Washington Bush, the first Black American to serve in the Washington Territorial Legislature; and

WHEREAS, George Washington Bush headed to the Northwest seeking a place free of prejudice with his wife and family, homesteaded a 640-acre parcel that later became Bush Prairie, now known as Tumwater; and

WHEREAS, George Washington Bush founded the city of Centerville, now known as Centralia, and single-handedly saved the city from bankruptcy and starvation during the closing of iron works and local lumber mills, by providing food for the local citizens and making "interest free" loans to residents of the community; and

WHEREAS, Representatives Charles Stokes and Marjorie Pitter King were the first Black American man and woman to serve in the legislature following the proclamation of Washington statehood, and Charles Z. Smith was the first Black American to serve on the Washington State Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, The Washington State Legislature is honored to have among its former members the following elected Black American representatives and senators: Sam Smith, Michael Ross, Peggie Joan Maxie, George Fleming, Bill Smitherman, Jesse Wineberry, Vivian Caver, and Dawn Mason; and

WHEREAS, Black Americans have made significant contributions to Washington State history in several fields, including: Civil rights leader Edwin T. Pratt; poet Mona Lake Jones; artists Jacob Lawrence and James Washington; historian Esther Mumford; and musicians Quincy Jones, Ernestine Anderson, and Jimi Hendrix;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State House of Representatives recognize February 2005, as Black History Month, in recognition of Americans of African descent who have contributed to America; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the members of the Washington State House of Representatives do hereby recognize and appreciate the many benefits of Black History Month to our citizenry and to our culture in general and that we urge all citizens of the State of Washington to join with us in taking the opportunity this month to explore this rich history and expand our world view; 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.

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of

Resolution 4614 adopted by the House of Representatives
February 14, 2005

Richard Nafziger, Chief Clerk