

SENATE RESOLUTION
8630

By Senators Nelson, Angel, Bailey, Baumgartner, Becker, Benton, Billig, Braun, Brown, Chase, Cleveland, Conway, Dammeier, Dandel, Darneille, Ericksen, Fain, Fraser, Frockt, Habib, Hargrove, Hasegawa, Hatfield, Hewitt, Hill, Hobbs, Honeyford, Jayapal, Keiser, King, Kohl-Welles, Lias, Litzow, McAuliffe, McCoy, Miloscia, Mullet, O'Ban, Padden, Parlette, Pearson, Pedersen, Ranker, Rivers, Roach, Rolfes, Schoesler, Sheldon, and Warnick

1 WHEREAS, Today we join with the people of the State of Washington
2 and throughout our nation to honor the 50th anniversary of the
3 historic march led by Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his
4 courageous followers in Selma, Alabama; and

5 WHEREAS, In 1965, only two percent of Selma's eligible black
6 voters were able to register as a result of efforts to prevent voter
7 registration; and

8 WHEREAS, On February 18, 1965, white segregationists attacked a
9 group of peaceful demonstrators and killed Jimmie Lee Jackson, a
10 young black demonstrator, and in response to Jackson's death, Dr.
11 King and his followers made three attempts to march from Selma to
12 Montgomery, 54 miles away; and

13 WHEREAS, The first march took place on March 7, 1965, without Dr.
14 King, and was met with violent resistance from Alabama authorities
15 who subjected 600 defenseless marchers to attacks from whips,
16 nightsticks, and tear gas; and

17 WHEREAS, After a second attempt to march was blocked by Alabama
18 authorities, President Lyndon B. Johnson pledged his support for the
19 marchers, and lobbied for passage of new voting rights laws in
20 Congress; and

21 WHEREAS, Nearly 2,000 people set out on a third march from Selma
22 on March 21, 1965, protected by the United States Army and the
23 Alabama National Guard, and after walking for 12 hours a day, the

1 group arrived in Montgomery on March 25, 1965, and were met by 50,000
2 black and white supporters; and

3 WHEREAS, These historic marches raised awareness of the
4 difficulties faced by African Americans in the South; and

5 WHEREAS, The Voting Rights Act passed through Congress as a
6 direct result of the marches in Selma, and remains one of the most
7 impactful pieces of civil rights legislation in American history; and

8 WHEREAS, The marches led by Dr. King were a landmark achievement
9 of the 1960's Civil Rights Movement, and another prominent example of
10 Dr. King achieving change by nonviolent means;

11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate
12 honor the 50th anniversary of the final march in Selma; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate, on
14 behalf of the people of our state, recognize the importance of the
15 marches at Selma, and reflect on the blood and tears shed to secure
16 civil rights and freedoms for every American.

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