HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2021-4604, by Representative Kraft

WHEREAS, President Ronald Reagan issued the Presidential Proclamation 5443 which declared "the foremost purpose of Black History Month is to make all Americans aware of this struggle for freedom and equal opportunity." It also states that this month is a time "to celebrate the many achievements of African Americans in every field from science and the arts to politics and religion."; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led a movement rooted in love, faith, and purpose to promote a nation where children "will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character"; and

WHEREAS, The desire to succeed and contribute to America caused Black Americans to rise above racial hostility, Jim Crow Laws, and the remnants of other economic and social injustices; and

WHEREAS, Marilyn Strickland became the first Black woman to represent the State of Washington at the federal level in the United States House of Representatives, and she is one of the first Korean American women to be elected to Congress in its 230 year history; and

WHEREAS, G. Helen Whitener is the first Black woman to serve on the Washington State Supreme Court, the fourth immigrant-born Justice; and

WHEREAS, We also recognize the accomplishments attained by political leaders such as George Washington Bush, a Black Pioneer, and one of the earliest permanent American settlers in the Washington Territory in 1845, William Owen Bush, the first Black person to serve in the legislature in 1889, John H. Ryan, the only Black American to serve in the legislature under three different parties (Farm-Labor, Republican, and Democrat), John Lewis, Civil Rights leader and United States Congressman, and Barack Obama, the first Black President of the United States; and

WHEREAS, The list of contributions by other Black Americans to the socioeconomic and cultural fabric of Washington State is long, and includes the writings of Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, Ralph Ellison, Octavia Butler, and Toni Morrison; and

WHEREAS, Scientific achievements include the inventions of George Washington Carver and the three NASA workers—Katherine Goble, Mary Jackson, and Dorothy Vaughan—whose calculations helped put astronauts on the moon; and

WHEREAS, Black soldiers helped unite the military and the nation, from formerly enslaved people fighting in the Civil War to the Tuskegee Airmen who helped win World War II; and

WHEREAS, Warriors for justice and equality include Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Fannie Lou Hamer, Thurgood Marshall, and Rosa Parks;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives celebrate Black History Month and recognize the legacy and innumerable contributions of Black Americans to the lives of Washingtonians, in February and throughout the whole year.