

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2026-4701, by Representatives Donaghy, Street, Taylor, Reeves, Thomas, Reed, Rude, Dent, Connors, Marshall, Steele, Schmidt, Waters, Griffey, Eslick, Penner, McClintock, Low, Dye, Manjarrez, Volz, Stokesbary, Stuebe, Jacobsen, Engell, Walsh, Burnett, Ley, Mendoza, Graham, Abbarno, Orcutt, Keaton, Klicker, and Corry

1 WHEREAS, 2026 marks the centennial of celebrating Black History
2 across the nation and in Washington state; and

3 WHEREAS, Historian Dr. Carter Woodson worked to establish Negro
4 History Week in 1926, and President Gerald Ford expanded the
5 celebration of Black accomplishments to all of February in 1976; and

6 WHEREAS, While Dr. Woodson would not live to experience the
7 adoption of Black History Month, his own contributions, expertise,
8 and advocacy have been invaluable in continuing to expand recognition
9 of the contributions of Black Americans to this state and nation; and

10 WHEREAS, Much of the history of Black Americans can be viewed
11 through the lens of the long, hard struggle to reconcile the reality
12 of slavery, Jim Crow, and segregation with the words and ideals
13 written in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, 2026 is the year in which we look back on 100 years of
16 celebration and recognition of Black history, contributions, culture,
17 and accomplishments; and

18 WHEREAS, The 1920s delivered the Golden Age of Jazz led by Black
19 musicians like Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and Bessie Smith with
20 their driving rhythms, rich voices, clear instruments, captivating
21 music, and compelling dance; and

22 WHEREAS, The 1930s saw Black American led advancements in
23 agricultural science with the work of George Washington Carver,

1 personal care and beauty due to the ingenuity of Mary Beatrice
2 Davidson Kenner, Marjorie Joyner, and so many others determined to
3 make the lives of all just a bit easier; and

4 WHEREAS, The 1940s "Great Migration" swelled the Black population
5 in Washington with the promise of wartime jobs and opportunity, but
6 not without crowding, discrimination, housing inequities, and
7 segregation; and

8 WHEREAS, The 1950s experienced a rise in the civil rights
9 movement in Washington as Black Washingtonians became the largest
10 minority population in the Puget Sound area, and stood up to demand
11 equal treatment; and

12 WHEREAS, The 1960s saw the appointment of the first Black woman
13 to the Washington State Legislature in Marjorie Pitter-King and the
14 civil rights movement continuing to intensify across the nation,
15 calling for equal rights and justice for Black Americans while Black
16 Americans continued to offer technological advances through the work
17 of inventors like Marie Van Brittan Brown and James E. West; and

18 WHEREAS, The 1970s was a decade of Black empowerment, education
19 and transformational change, with the first all Black Washington
20 state legislative delegation out of the 37th district including
21 Senator George Fleming, Representative Michael K. Ross, and
22 Representative Peggy Joan Maxie, and the advent of the American
23 Ethnic Studies department and the Ethnic Cultural Center at the
24 University of Washington through the work of the Black Student Union;
25 and

26 WHEREAS, The 1980s marked the establishment of Martin Luther
27 King, Jr. Day as a federal holiday, signed into law by President
28 Ronald Reagan, and the launch of Black Entertainment Television while
29 Black communities across the United States experienced significant
30 pushback against earlier civil rights advancements; and

31 WHEREAS, The 1990s saw: Carol Moseley Braun from Illinois, the
32 first Black woman elected to the United States Senate; Rosa Gourdine
33 Franklin, the first Black woman elected to the Washington State
34 Senate; and Dr. Mae Jemison, the first Black woman to go to space;
35 and

36 WHEREAS, In the 2000s, Barack Obama became the first Black
37 President of the United States of America, Ron Ward became the first
38 Black President of the Washington State Bar Association, and Dr.
39 Patricia Bath revolutionized cataract treatments; and

1 WHEREAS, The 2010s saw the opening of the National Museum of
2 African American History and Culture, Misty Copeland became the first
3 Black principal dancer at the American Ballet Theater, and Loretta
4 Lynch became the first Black woman to serve as Attorney General of
5 the United States; and

6 WHEREAS, In the 2020s, Marilyn Strickland was the first Black
7 member elected to the United States House of Representatives in
8 Washington's 10th congressional district, Kamala Harris became the
9 first Black and South Asian Vice President of the United States, and
10 Victor Glover was named the first Black Astronaut for a moon mission;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Black Americans and Black Washingtonians still to this
13 day demonstrate the ingenuity, entrepreneurship, leadership, and
14 creativity that continues to benefit this nation and all of
15 Washington; and

16 WHEREAS, Black history is American history. Black culture is
17 American culture; and

18 WHEREAS, This Black History Month, and every month, is a time to
19 learn about those who came before us, and keep pushing towards a
20 brighter, more just future;

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives
22 celebrate Black History Month and recognize the legacy and
23 innumerable contributions of Black Americans to the lives of
24 Washingtonians, not only in February but throughout the whole year;
25 and

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor
27 and thank all of the Black individuals who participated in the
28 shaping of the United States, as well as all Black and African
29 American active-duty military personnel, veterans, elected leaders
30 and others who serve, and encourage the celebration of Black History
31 Month in our schools, universities, communities, and neighborhoods,
32 to foster a better understanding of that history and its importance
33 here in Washington and throughout this nation.

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