

House Resolution

No. 28

Introduced by Assembly Member Jones-Sawyer

January 28, 2014

House Resolution No. 28—Relative to Black History Month.

1 WHEREAS, Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson, distinguished African
2 American author, editor, publisher, and historian, who is known
3 as the “Father of Black History,” founded Negro History Week in
4 1926, which became Black History Month in 1976, intended to
5 encourage further research and publishing regarding the untold
6 stories of African American heritage; and

7 WHEREAS, The history of African Americans here in the
8 United States, as well as throughout the ages, is indeed unique and
9 vibrant, and it is appropriate to celebrate this history during the
10 month of February 2014, which has been proclaimed as Black
11 History Month; and

12 WHEREAS, There is even greater cause for a reverent
13 celebration in 2014 as Americans reflect on the significance of the
14 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act, and the 60th anniversary
15 of the landmark United States Supreme Court case of Brown versus
16 the Board of Education; and

17 WHEREAS, The history of the United States is rich with
18 inspirational stories of great men and noble women whose actions,
19 words, and achievements have united Americans and contributed
20 to the success and prosperity of the United States; and

21 WHEREAS, The slave trade was a tragic episode in African
22 history and began before August 1619 when the first slaves arrived
23 in Jamestown, Virginia. During the course of the slave trade, an
24 estimated 50 million African men, women, and children were lost

1 to their native continent, though only about 15 million arrived
2 safely to a new home. The others lost their lives on African soil
3 or along the Guinea coast, or finally in holds on the ships during
4 the dreaded Middle Passage across the Atlantic Ocean; and

5 WHEREAS, The first American to shed blood in the revolution
6 that freed America from British rule was Crispus Attucks, an
7 African American seaman and slave killed on March 5, 1770, in
8 the Boston Massacre. African Americans also fought in wars
9 including the Battles of Lexington and Concord in April 1775,
10 Ticonderoga, White Plains, Bennington, Brandywine, Saratoga,
11 Savannah, Yorktown, Bunker Hill, the Battle of Rhode Island on
12 August 29, 1775, and other revolutionary war battles, the War of
13 1812, including, the Battle of New Orleans, the Civil War, the
14 Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II, Korea, and Vietnam;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, In spite of the African slave trade, many Africans
17 and African Americans continued to move forward in society;
18 during the Reconstruction period, two African Americans served
19 in the United States Senate and 14 served in the United States
20 House of Representatives; and

21 WHEREAS, From the earliest days of the United States, the
22 course of its history has been greatly influenced by Black heroes
23 and pioneers in many diverse areas, from science, medicine,
24 business, and education to government, industry, and social
25 leadership; and

26 WHEREAS, Africans and African Americans have also been
27 great inventors, inventing and improving things such as the
28 air-conditioning unit, almanac, automatic gearshift, blood plasma
29 bag, clothes dryer, doorknob, doorstop, electric lamp bulb, elevator,
30 fire escape ladder, fountain pen, gas mask, golf tee, horseshoe,
31 lantern, lawnmower, lawn sprinkler, lock, lubricating cup,
32 refrigerating apparatus, spark plug, stethoscope, telephone
33 transmitter, thermostat control, traffic signal, and typewriter; and

34 WHEREAS, A number of these brave and accomplished
35 individuals, such as Booker T. Washington, George Washington
36 Carver, Matthew Hensen, Daniel Hale Williams, Dr. Charles Drew,
37 Jackie Robinson, Jesse Owens, Curt Flood, Medgar Evers, and,
38 of course, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., are noted prominently in
39 the history books of students nationwide, thus enabling students

1 to learn about the important and lasting contributions of these
2 individuals; and

3 WHEREAS, Among those Americans who have enriched our
4 society are the members of the African American
5 community—individuals who have been steadfast in their
6 commitment to promoting brotherhood, equality, and justice for
7 all; now, therefore, be it

8 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California*, That the
9 Assembly takes great pleasure in recognizing February 2014 as
10 Black History Month, urges all citizens to join in celebrating the
11 accomplishments of African Americans during Black History
12 Month, and encourages the people of California to recognize the
13 many talents, achievements, and contributions that African
14 Americans make to their communities; and be it further

15 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
16 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.