

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE  
2011–12 FIRST EXTRAORDINARY SESSION

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# SENATE DAILY JOURNAL

NINTH LEGISLATIVE DAY

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## IN SENATE

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Senate Chamber, Sacramento  
Monday, February 7, 2011

The Senate met at 2 p.m.  
Hon. Christine Kehoe, of the 39th District, presiding.  
Secretary Greg Schmidt at the Desk.  
Assistant Secretary Zachary L. Twilla reading.

### ROLL CALL

The roll was called and the following Senators answered to their names:

Alquist, Anderson, Berryhill, Blakeslee, Calderon, Cannella, Corbett, Correa, De León, DeSaulnier, Dutton, Emmerson, Fuller, Gaines, Hancock, Harman, Hernandez, Huff, Kehoe, La Malfa, Leno, Lowenthal, Negrete McLeod, Padilla, Pavley, Price, Rubio, Simitian, Steinberg, Strickland, Vargas, Walters, Wolk, Wright, Wyland, and Yee—36.

Quorum present.

*(NOTE: Senator Liu will be excused this day on personal business and Senator Evans will be excused this day due to illness.)*



### PRAYER

Upon invitation of the President, the following prayer was offered by Senator Roderick Wright:

Members and guests, today we celebrate the first Monday of Black History Month. The idea of celebrating Black History was the brainchild of the famous African American historian, Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Dr. Woodson observed that in order to gain respect in American society your accomplishments had to be recognized in print or you were simply overlooked.

So in 1926 he chose the second week of February as Negro History Week. Contrary to the popular urban legend, February was not chosen because it was the shortest month. Fact is, Dr. Woodson decided on February because Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass were both born in that month and he felt they were the two most important figures in black history at that time. In 1976, "Negro History" Week was changed to "Black History" and expanded to the entire month that we know today.

Then, as now, there was much debate as to whether the idea celebrating Black History was a good one. Concerns and debate continue regarding whether or not the commercialization and racial focus associated with Black History Month actually has a negative impact on race relations. It was always Dr. Woodson's dream that the idea would one day outlive its usefulness, and that Black History would be fully integrated into the American fabric.

Just as Dr. Woodson recognized Lincoln and Douglass as the two most significant individuals in Black History for his time—a black man and a white man—real progress today is achieved by people working to understand the other guy's point of view and expanding their own perspectives.

In the New Testament, Book of Mark, there is an excellent example of the disciples having to expand their world view. For those of you who want to read it for yourselves, look at Mark 9:38. Reading from the New International Version:

"Teacher," said John, "we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us."

"Do not stop him," Jesus said. "No one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me. For whoever is not against us is for us."

Black History Month and the parable in Mark are examples of people from different backgrounds working together toward a common goal. The



lesson here for us, as the leaders of California, is that we must work toward a common goal. Good ideas are not the sole province of one side of the aisle or the other. We must be ever so careful to not let the perfect become the enemy of the good.

I want to close with the words of James Weldon Johnson:

God of our weary years,  
God of our silent tears,  
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;  
Thou who hast by Thy might,  
Led us into the light,  
Keep us forever in the path we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,  
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,  
May we forever stand,  
True to our God,  
True to our native land.—AMEN.

#### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

Senator Corbett led the Senate in the pledge of allegiance to the Flag.

#### **LEAVES OF ABSENCE FOR THE DAY**

The following Senator was granted leave of absence for the day due to personal business: Senator Liu.

The following Senator was granted leave of absence for the day due to illness: Senator Evans.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 3:30 p.m., the President declared the Senate adjourned on call of the President pro Tempore.

PAULA K. ROSSETTO, Minute Clerk

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