

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 1808

A RESOLUTION recognizing February as Black History Month.

WHEREAS, Throughout the history of America, truly significant African-American contributions to the economy, military, social growth, sciences and arts of this great nation have all too often been ignored. In recognition of this unfair distortion of the facts, Americans began recognizing “Black History Month” annually in 1926. We owe the celebration of Black History Month, and more importantly, the study of black history, to Dr. Carter G. Woodson; and

WHEREAS, The progress of African-Americans, both in the nation generally, and in the State of Kansas specifically, has been marked with both the tragedy of social inequalities and the triumph of group achievements; and

WHEREAS, The state of Kansas produced the monumental decision of *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka*, and is also home to the great black photographer Gordon Parks; and

WHEREAS, Although African-Americans have participated in every major United States war, the battle for integration and for recognition of the accomplishments of black soldiers has been a slow process. It wasn't until after World War II that the United States Armed Forces became integrated, under a 1948 executive order by President Harry S. Truman; and

WHEREAS, Credit to blacks in the military has gradually been awarded where due and quite often where long overdue. One of the historical black regiments that exemplify the struggles and the contributions made by African-Americans in armed forces was the 54th Massachusetts Infantry, one of the first black units to join the Union during the Civil War. Sergeant William H. Carney from the 54th Massachusetts Infantry risked his life to take the flag and lead the troops after Colonel Robert Gould Shaw had been fatally wounded. Sergeant Carney was severely wounded by two bullets during the battle but survived to become the first African-American to be presented the Congressional Medal of Honor on May 23, 1900; and

WHEREAS, The courageous accomplishments of these many fearless soldiers are now recorded in history including: the Buffalo Soldiers of the Ninth and Tenth Cavalries and the 38th through 41st Infantry, all composed of African-American soldiers; and the Tuskegee Airmen of World War II headed by Captain Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., who would later become the first African-American Air Force General; and

WHEREAS, In the words of Carter Woodson, on the founding of Negro History Week in 1926, “We should emphasize not Negro History, but the Negro in history. What we need is not a history of selected races or nations but the history of the world void of national bias, race, hate and religious prejudice”: Now, therefore,

*Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas:* That the body recognizes February as Black History Month, and further recognizes and applauds the sacrifices and myriad contributions made by African-American men and women throughout this great nation's history.

Senate Resolution No. 1808 was sponsored by Senator Donald Betts, Jr..

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the SENATE, and was adopted by that body

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*President of the Senate.*

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*Secretary of the Senate.*