

State of Wisconsin



2009 Senate Joint Resolution 63

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION

Relating to: recognizing Black History Month.

Whereas, Americans have recognized black history annually since 1926, first as “Negro History Week” and later as “Black History Month,” and the Wisconsin legislature in the past has commemorated February as Black History Month to honor the lives and contributions of Wisconsin African American citizens; and

Whereas, Mr. Ezekiel Gillespie successfully argued before the Wisconsin Supreme Court that an 1849 referendum granting African American men the right to vote was valid, thus granting, in 1866, the franchise of voting to African American men in Wisconsin more than four years before passage of the 15th Amendment to the United States Constitution; and

Whereas, Dr. Roger Pulliam of the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater community has given more than 20 years of service as a tireless advocate for equal opportunity and academic diversity and has effectively led programs for the recruitment and support of minority and disadvantaged students, which have resulted in an increase in the number of multicultural students on campus, as well as developing a welcoming and nurturing environment for these students, and currently serves the UW–Whitewater in the rank of Assistant Vice Chancellor Emeritus; and

Whereas, civil rights activist Corinne Owens started the Racine chapter of the NAACP in 1947 and as an educator was denied a teaching job in Racine due to a district policy that at the time barred African American teachers. She has lead campaigns for fair housing in Racine, more police officers on the Racine streets, and more minority teachers in the classroom and she was inducted into the Southeastern Wisconsin Educator’s Hall of Fame in 1994; and

Whereas, Mellie Concentine, a former Racine Unified School District teaching assistant and Racine resident for 50 years, was inducted into the Tuskegee University Athletic Hall of Fame on September 19, 2009, where she was a standout in track and field and basketball from 1946–50. She tried out for the 1948 Olympics in the shot put and discus. She and her (now deceased) husband, James, have five children, Terri, James, Brigit, Janet, and William; and

Whereas, Ola Baiyewu was recently honored as one of the 2010 Community Service Award winners at the University of Wisconsin–Parkside’s Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., celebration, and is the Executive Director of Racine’s First Choice Pre–Apprenticeship Program, which, since the program’s inception in 2005, has helped hundreds of Racine residents obtain high–quality jobs in construction and manufacturing; and

Whereas, Ms. Jeanetta Simpson–Robinson originally founded Career Youth Development in Milwaukee, Wisconsin as an after–school program along with her mother, Claretta “Mother Freedom” Simpson, but soon expanded the services offered to include youth gang intervention, college classes, vocational training, drug prevention and treatment, Children’s Court Advocacy, and “Victory Over Violence” family grief counseling; and

Whereas, Charles “Butch” Walton, the son of Jeanetta Simpson–Robinson currently operates Career Youth Development in Milwaukee, carrying on his mother’s tradition of “Love in Action,”

and is instrumental in raising the funds to maintain and mark the portion of Interstate 43 named in honor of his mother pursuant to Senate Bill 410; and

Whereas, Attorney John Daniels is a pioneer in the fields of law, urban development, and philanthropy as Chairman of Quarles & Brady and has dedicated himself to the improvement of Milwaukee through joint private/public partnerships and through leading by example in the giving back to the community through volunteerism and charity work; and

Whereas, Clayborn Benson, a native of Milwaukee who faced challenges in an impoverished youth and graduated from the old West Division High School despite being labeled “learning disabled,” and now runs the Wisconsin Black Historical Society Museum in Milwaukee where exhibits showcase the history, contributions, and achievements of African Americans in Wisconsin; and

Whereas, Hugo H. Henry of Beloit dedicated his life to teaching, tutoring, mentoring, and encouraging children to reach their full potential, teaching social studies and history for 34 years at Beloit Memorial High School and McNeel Middle School. Mr. Henry was also a respected and beloved member of the Beloit community in his capacities as city council member, role model, speaker, and singer and his rich baritone graced the choir of Emmanuel Baptist Church and many community events, including the sharing of his gift of eloquence as announcer at Beloit Memorial High School basketball games and other venues; before departing this world on March 17, 2008; and

Whereas, Rev. Dr. Floyd Prude Jr. faithfully served the families of the Emmanuel Baptist Church and the Beloit community from July 1973 until his death on November 28, 2009. His wise counsel and compassion extended far beyond his congregation as he served for 23 years as president of the Greater Beloit Minority Coalition and was a charter member and director of the Beloit 2020 Development Corporation, and Pastor Prude gave generously of his time, talents, and leadership to numerous other community organizations and causes, including service in many leadership positions in the Baptist Church and American Baptist College. Pastor Prude could always be counted on to lend his sage advice and hard work to projects that fed the hungry, mentored the young, and strengthened the community, and he was a strong and steady voice for equality and justice; and

Whereas, Paul D. Mackey Jr. served in Uzbekistan 2004–05 as part of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), attaining the rank of major during his military service, and is currently employed as the Operations Manager of the Environment Services Department at the Center for Veterans Issues, Ltd., where during 2008 he assisted greatly in the center’s indirect cost planning, winning approval for the plan from the U.S. Department of Labor; and

Whereas, William L. Sims was awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart for his actions while in service in Vietnam with 101st Airborne Division in 1965 and 1966; upon returning to the United States he was the original founding member of the National Association for Black Veterans, Inc., and is currently employed as the Special Assistant to the President and chief executive officer of the Center for Veterans Issues, Ltd.; and

Whereas, many African Americans have served in the legislature, including former senators Monroe Swan, Gwendolynne Moore, Gary George and former representatives Lucian Palmer, Le Roy Simmons, Isaac Coggs, Cecil B. Brown, Walton Bryan Stewart, Raymond Lee Lathan, Lloyd Barbee, Walter L. Ward, Marcia P. Coggs, Johnnie Morris–Tatum, and Antonio Riley; now therefore be it

Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That the legislature of the state of Wisconsin recognizes the month of February 2010 as “Black History Month,” and extends thanks and praise to the above named persons for their contributions to the state of Wisconsin and their fellow citizens.

Representative Michael J. Sheridan
Speaker of the Assembly

Senator Fred A. Risser
President of the Senate

Date

Robert J. Marchant
Senate Chief Clerk