

State of Misconsin 2007 - 2008 LEGISLATURE

## **2007 SENATE RESOLUTION 16**

February 27, 2008 – Introduced by Senators TAYLOR and COGGS. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

1	Relating to: commending the life and public service of Ezekiel Gillespie.
2	Whereas, Ezekiel Gillespie was born about May 31, 1818, in Greene County,
3	Tennessee; and
4	Whereas, he sustained himself during his youth by selling small, self-made
5	goods that he peddled from town to town; and
6	Whereas, in 1852, he moved to Milwaukee, earning a living by selling groceries,
7	vegetables, poultry, and game; and
8	Whereas, he eventually went to work for Alexander Mitchell, working as a
9	porter for the Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Company; and
10	Whereas, despite his limited financial means, he selflessly boarded migrant
11	families from the south; and
12	Whereas, in 1865, he helped to petition the legislature for a referendum on
13	African–American suffrage; and
14	Whereas, later that year, while attempting to vote in that referendum, he was
15	denied suffrage by the Milwaukee Board of Election Commissioners; and

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1	Whereas, he successfully brought suit against the board, prompting the
2	Wisconsin Supreme Court to decide unanimously in favor of African American
3	suffrage; and
4	Whereas, thanks to his efforts, African Americans for the first time voted freely
5	in elections during the elections of 1866; and
6	Whereas, in 1869, he helped found the first African Methodist Episcopal church
7	in Wisconsin; and
8	Whereas, he spent much of his late life raising funds for, and speaking on behalf
9	of, the church; and
10	Whereas, Gillespie died in 1892; and
11	Whereas, the adoption of this senate resolution is supported not only by the
12	senate, but also by members of the assembly, including specifically Representatives
13	Sheridan, Schneider, Young, Grigsby, Sinicki, Mason, Fields, Benedict, Turner, and
14	Hintz; now, therefore, be it
15	<b>Resolved by the senate, That</b> the members of the Wisconsin senate do hereby
16	commemorate the life and achievements of Ezekiel Gillespie.
17	(END)

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