

2007 SENATE RESOLUTION 20

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

1 **Relating to:** the life and activism of James Cameron.

2 Whereas, James Cameron was born on February 23, 1914, in LaCrosse,
3 Wisconsin, and died on June 11, 2006; and

4 Whereas, James Cameron was happily married to Virginia for 50 years and
5 their union was blessed with five children, eight grandchildren, and four great
6 grandchildren; and

7 Whereas, at the age of 16, James Cameron was wrongfully charged with
8 murder and sentenced to death, along with two of his friends who were lynched by
9 a mob, but Mr. Cameron's life was miraculously spared and he was recognized in
10 2005 by the U.S. Senate as the only known survivor of a lynching; and

11 Whereas, Mr. Cameron actively promoted social justice and civil liberties
12 following his four years in prison and his parole in 1935 after which he was
13 exonerated for the harassment and murder charges that he was accused of; and

1 Whereas, he served as the Indiana State Director of Civil Liberties from
2 1942–1950 and started the Madison, Muncie, and South Bend, Indiana chapters of
3 the NAACP; and

4 Whereas, Mr. Cameron worked to put an end to segregated housing in
5 Milwaukee upon his return to Wisconsin in 1950, took part in the civil rights marches
6 on Washington, and wrote extensively, publishing hundreds of articles and booklets
7 to educate individuals about civil rights issues; and

8 Whereas, James Cameron made several personal sacrifices for the furtherance
9 of knowledge relating to racial injustices, including taking a second mortgage on his
10 home in order to publish his memoir, *A Time of Terror*; and

11 Whereas, in 1979 Mr. Cameron visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in
12 Israel which inspired him to mirror the struggles of African–Americans and the
13 racial injustices that took place in Wisconsin not so long ago, by founding America’s
14 Black Holocaust Museum in Milwaukee in 1988, in order to preserve the history of
15 African–American’s subjected to violence through lynching; and

16 Whereas, James Cameron, at the age of 80, continued his activism, and led a
17 protest against a Ku Klux Klan rally; and

18 Whereas, James Cameron received a formal apology from the U.S. Senate for
19 our failure to outlaw lynching; and

20 Whereas, the adoption of this senate resolution is supported not only by the
21 senate, but also by members of the assembly, including specifically Representatives
22 Sheridan, Schneider, Young, Grigsby, Sinicki, Mason, Fields, Benedict, Turner, and
23 Hintz; now, therefore, be it

24 ***Resolved by the senate, That*** the members of the Wisconsin senate commend
25 the devoted activism and service that James Cameron contributed to his state and

1 his community, in an effort to continue his vision of an America, free of the evils of
2 racism.

3 (END)