June 20, 2019 – Introduced by Representatives BOWEN and HAYWOOD. Referred to Committee on Rules.

Relating to: proclaiming June as Caribbean–American Heritage Month in Wisconsin.

Whereas, the mission of Caribbean–American Heritage Month is to promote the vibrant and rich culture of the Caribbean–American people and their unique contribution to the United States on a national level; and

Whereas, this year marks the 13th anniversary of June as National Caribbean–American Heritage Month; and

Whereas, the Institute of Caribbean Studies began petitioning for recognition of a Caribbean–American Heritage Month to President Bill Clinton in 1999; and

Whereas, Congresswoman Barbara Lee first introduced House Resolution 570 in the United States House of Representatives on March 14, 2004, proposing that Caribbean–American Heritage Month be recognized at a federal level; and

Whereas, this resolution was reintroduced the following session and was passed by the House of Representatives in June 2005 and by the Senate in February 2006; and
Whereas, a Proclamation recognizing the passage of the resolution was signed by President George H.W. Bush on June 5, 2006, making federal recognition of Caribbean-American Heritage Month official; and

Whereas, the United States’ Caribbean-American population is approximately 4.4 million people, with communities of Puerto Rican, Jamaican, Haitian, Cuban, and Dominican descent making up the largest part of the Caribbean-American population; and

Whereas, the 30 Under 30 Caribbean-American Emerging Leaders/Change Makers Award is presented to individuals demonstrating leadership in the United States, a country in CARICOM, or a British, French, or Dutch Dependency; and

Whereas, people of Caribbean-American descent have made significant differences in their respective fields, such as:

• Clarie Alicia Nelson — founder of the Institute of Caribbean Studies, who is also the first Jamaican woman to earn a Doctorate degree in an engineering discipline;

• Colin Powell — the first black U.S Secretary of State, whose parents were born in Jamaica;

• Jean Baptiste Point du Sable — founder of Chicago, born in Haiti;

• Antonia Novello — the first female U.S. Surgeon General, born in Puerto Rico;

• Alexander Hamilton — the first Secretary of the U.S. Treasury, born in Nevis;

• Stokley Carmichael — a black power activist, born in Trinidad;

• Marion Jones — a track and field Olympic gold medalist, whose parents are from Belize;
•Shirley Chisholm — the first African–American Congresswoman and the first black woman to run for president on a major party ticket, whose parents are from Barbados and British Guiana;

•Harry Belafonte — a Calypso artist and civil rights activist, whose parents are from Jamaica and Martinique;

•Eric Holder — the first African–American to hold the position of U.S. Attorney General, whose parents are from Barbados;

•Dr. William Thornton — a physician and architect who designed the U.S. Capitol, born in the British Virgin Islands;

•Jennifer Carroll — retired naval officer and politician, the first African–American woman and Trinidadian–American elected as Lieutenant Governor of Florida;

•David Bowen — a Wisconsin politician and Democratic member of the Wisconsin State Assembly, representing Wisconsin’s 10th Assembly District; and

Whereas, it is important to appreciate and remember the Caribbean-Americans who have positively shaped and enhanced our culture, society, and government in the past as well as the present and as they continue to make great contributions to the melting pot we call America; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That the Wisconsin State Legislature does hereby recognize June as Caribbean–American Heritage Month.

(END)