



2021 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 123

January 28, 2022 - Introduced by Representatives STUBBS, ARMSTRONG, BOWEN, BROSTOFF, CABRERA, CONSIDINE, DRAKE, HEBL, HESSELBEIN, HINTZ, HONG, KITCHENS, B. MEYERS, MOORE OMOKUNDE, L. MYERS, OHNSTAD, S. RODRIGUEZ, SHANKLAND, SHELTON, SINICKI, SPREITZER, STEFFEN, SUBECK, VINING and VRUWINK, cosponsored by Senators JOHNSON, CARPENTER, LARSON, ROYS and WIRCH. Referred to Committee on Rules.

1 **Relating to:** honoring Sidney Poitier.

2 Whereas, the brilliant and groundbreaking actor and diplomat Sidney Poitier
3 was one of the most impactful actors in Hollywood history; and

4 Whereas, Sidney Poitier was born in Miami, Florida, to Evelyn and Reginald
5 James Poitier. Despite being born on American soil, Mr. Poitier grew up on Cat Island
6 in the Bahamas with little formal education; and

7 Whereas, at the age of 14, Mr. Poitier came back to America to live with his
8 brother, where he witnessed firsthand the racial injustices that plagued Black
9 American communities; and

10 Whereas, Mr. Poitier worked his way to New York, where he worked several jobs
11 to make ends meet. While in New York, he began his venture into acting by
12 auditioning for the American Negro Theatre; and

13 Whereas, while Mr. Poitier's performance was rejected because of his lack of
14 education and non-American accent, he persevered to keep working towards
15 becoming an actor; and

1 Whereas, in 1946, Mr. Poitier was called to take the stage in an all-Black
2 production of *Lysistrata*, where he made his debut performance; and

3 Whereas, Mr. Poitier began to star in numerous roles in television and cinema,
4 including as Dr. Brooks in *No Way Out* (1950), as Gregory Miller in *Blackboard*
5 *Jungle* (1955), and as Noah Cullen in *The Defiant Ones* (1958), for which he received
6 an Oscar Nomination for Best Actor; and

7 Whereas, in 1963, Mr. Poitier became the first Black actor to win an Oscar for
8 Best Actor, which he won for his brilliant performance as Homer Smith in *Lilies of*
9 *the Field* (1963). This performance also won him the Golden Globe for Best Actor; and

10 Whereas, in addition to his trailblazing acting career, Mr. Poitier was also a
11 diplomat, activist, and ambassador in his time; and

12 Whereas, Mr. Poitier was a participant in the March on Washington in 1963 and
13 remained an outspoken voice against racial injustice throughout his life; and

14 Whereas, Mr. Poitier was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 1974 for his
15 contributions and impact on the world stage; and

16 Whereas, Mr. Poitier served as The Bahamas' Ambassador to Japan from
17 2002-2007 and also served as The Bahamas' ambassador to UNESCO; and

18 Whereas, in 2009, Mr. Poitier was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom
19 by President Barack Obama for his talent and hard work in advancing the nation's
20 dialogue on race and respect; now, therefore, be it

21 ***Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That*** the members of the
22 Wisconsin Legislature join in honoring Mr. Sidney Poitier as one of the legends in the
23 Golden Age of Hollywood.