

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 06-0140R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: President Dixon, Councilmembers D’Adamo, Curran, Holton, Branch, Young,
Mitchell, Reisinger, Kraft, Rawlings Blake, Clarke, Harris, Conaway, Welch, Spector
Introduced and adopted: February 6, 2006

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

Black History Month – February 2006

FOR the purpose of paying tribute to people of African descent by celebrating their indomitable spirit, sustaining faith, and indefatigable psyche that enabled them to overcome the horrors of their plight in the diaspora, celebrating the many positive contributions that they have made to our nation and to our City despite the nearly insurmountable odds of legislatively sanctioned bigotry, prejudice, and segregation, and encouraging residents of, and visitors to, our great city to visit the many historical and cultural attractions that are the legacy of our proud black ancestors.

Recitals

We owe the celebration of Black History Month, and the study of black history, to Dr. Carter G. Woodson who was born to parents who were former slaves. He spent his childhood working in the Kentucky coal mines and did not enroll in high school until the age of 20. After graduating from high school in 2 years, Dr. Woodson earned a Ph.D. from Harvard. During his time at Harvard, the scholar found that history books largely ignored the black American population – and when blacks were included they were portrayed as inferiors and in negative stereotypes.

Dr. Woodson undertook the challenge of writing black Americans into the nation’s history by establishing the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, now called the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, in 1915, and a year later founded the widely regarded Journal of Negro History. In 1926, he launched Negro History Week as an initiative to bring national attention to the contributions of black people throughout American history, choosing the second week of February because it marks the birthdays of 2 men who played an important part in that history, Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

As part of the nation’s 1976 bicentennial, Negro History Week was expanded into Black History Month. In 2006, the National Theme for the celebration is – *Celebrating Community: A Tribute to Black Fraternal, Social, and Civic Institutions*. In our City, there is much to celebrate as our Black population, which is now the proud majority, has played an essential role in the rich past, the exciting present, and the promising future. To become acquainted with this rich cultural, religious, and education history, one need only partake of the offerings of the Baltimore Area Convention and Visitors Association.

The Center proudly offers the Baltimore’s African American Heritage & Attractions Guide’s:

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

1 “Welcome to Baltimore!:

2 Baltimore is a city where legends are made and legacies are born.
3 During the 1930s and 1940s, jazz legends like Pearl Bailey, Count Basie
4 and Duke Ellington performed at the legendary Royal Theatre on
5 Baltimore's Pennsylvania Avenue. Billie Holiday became the
6 incomparable "Lady Day" right here in Charm City. Baltimore-born
7 composer and pianist Eubie Blake is honored, along with many of his
8 colleagues, at the Eubie Blake Cultural Center on North Howard Street.
9 All of these stories have helped shape Baltimore's, and our nation's,
10 history.

11 Baltimore is also the proud home of the NAACP headquarters, and the
12 birthplace of Thurgood Marshall, one of our early pioneers in the
13 movement for civil rights. You'll also find The National Great Blacks In
14 Wax Museum, the country's first wax museum of African American
15 history; the Baltimore Civil War Museum, which was once a stop on the
16 Underground Railroad; and opening early 2005, the Reginald F. Lewis
17 Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture. This \$33
18 million facility will be the East Coast's largest museum chronicling the
19 history of African Americans and will house artifacts and exhibits
20 covering more than 350 years of Maryland African American history and
21 culture.

22 Also, opening in 2005 is the Frederick Douglass-Isaac Myers
23 Maritime Park. The park honors Frederick Douglass, considered one of
24 the most prominent African American leaders of the 19th century, and
25 Isaac Myers, the first black owner of a marine railway shipyard in the
26 United States.

27 We hope you will discover some of these stories while you are here, and come
28 back to Baltimore again to create a legacy of your own.”

29 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That this
30 Body hereby pays tribute to people of African descent by celebrating their indomitable spirit,
31 sustaining faith, and indefatigable psyche that enabled them to overcome the horrors of their
32 plight in the diaspora, celebrates the many positive contributions that they have made to our
33 nation and to our City despite the nearly insurmountable odds of legislatively sanctioned bigotry,
34 prejudice, and segregation, and encourages residents of, and visitors to, our great city to visit the
35 many historical and cultural attractions that are the legacy of our proud black ancestors.

36 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
37 Director of the Baltimore Area Convention and Visitors Center, and the Mayor’s Legislative
38 Liaison to the City Council.