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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 224      Session of  
2003

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INTRODUCED BY J. WILLIAMS, BEBKO-JONES, BISHOP, COSTA,  
CREIGHTON, CRUZ, DALEY, DeWEESE, D. EVANS, FORCIER, GEIST,  
GEORGE, GRUCELA, HARHAI, HERMAN, HERSHEY, JOSEPHS, KIRKLAND,  
LAUGHLIN, MANDERINO, MCGILL, McNAUGHTON, PALLONE, PISTELLA,  
READSHAW, ROBERTS, ROSS, RUBLEY, SHANER, THOMAS, WALKO,  
WASHINGTON, WOJNAROSKI AND YOUNGBLOOD, APRIL 21, 2003

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
APRIL 21, 2003

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## A RESOLUTION

1 Commemorating the life of Octavius Catto and his contributions  
2 to political activism and observing the week of March 17  
3 through 23, 2003, as "Octavius Valentine Catto Week" in  
4 Pennsylvania.

5 WHEREAS, Octavius Valentine Catto was born in Charleston,  
6 South Carolina, in 1840 and died on October 10, 1871, in  
7 Philadelphia; and

8 WHEREAS, Octavius Catto was a scholar, an athlete and an  
9 African-American political activist; and

10 WHEREAS, Octavius Catto graduated valedictorian at the  
11 Institute for Colored Youth and was immediately added to the  
12 staff as assistant to the principal and teacher of English  
13 Literature, Higher Mathematics and Classical Languages; and

14 WHEREAS, Octavius Catto was founder, captain and shortstop of  
15 the finest baseball team in Philadelphia, the Pythian Baseball  
16 Club; and

1       WHEREAS, Octavius Catto founded the Banneker Literary  
2 Institute and the Equal Rights League; and

3       WHEREAS, Octavius Catto was a member of the Franklin  
4 Institute, Philadelphia Library Company, 4th Ward Black  
5 Political Club and the Union League Association; and

6       WHEREAS, Facing violence and intimidation, Octavius Catto  
7 courageously cast his vote on October 10, 1871, in the first  
8 local election after the 15th Amendment enfranchised certain  
9 African Americans; and

10       WHEREAS, Octavius Catto worked to protect the voting rights  
11 and safety of others before he was fatally shot on that violent  
12 election day; therefore be it

13       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commemorate the  
14 life and achievements of Octavius Catto and his contributions to  
15 political activism in American history; and be it further

16       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge all public  
17 and private educational institutions in this Commonwealth, the  
18 State Library, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
19 and the Department of Education to promote the study of Octavius  
20 Catto's life and contributions to American society; and be it  
21 further

22       RESOLVED, That the week of March 17 through 23, 2003, be  
23 observed as "Octavius Valentine Catto Week" in Pennsylvania.