

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 364 Session of
2005

INTRODUCED BY WILLIAMS, BLACKWELL, THOMAS, CRUZ AND BISHOP,
JUNE 22, 2005

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
JUNE 22, 2005

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing June 19, 2005, as "Bishop Joshua Henry Jones Day" in
2 Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Joshua Henry Jones rose beyond all expectations of
4 recently freed African Americans by becoming a recognized
5 celebrant in the African Methodist Episcopal bishopric; and

6 WHEREAS, The principal leadership of Mr. Jones in the African
7 Methodist Episcopal Church, his noble acts for mankind and his
8 fine work in the community made him a strong role model in the
9 African-American community; and

10 WHEREAS, Born to his slave mother and her master on June 15,
11 1856, Joshua Henry Jones was raised on the plantation of Asbury
12 Hurley in South Carolina; and

13 WHEREAS, Joshua Henry Jones attended Columbia's Shady Grove
14 African Methodist Episcopal Church when slavery ended and became
15 ordained at the tender age of 19; and

16 WHEREAS, Mr. Jones continued his thirst for knowledge by
17 attending Claflin University, where he received his bachelor's

1 degree, and later attended both Howard and Wilberforce
2 Universities for graduate studies; and

3 WHEREAS, Upon completing his graduate studies, Joshua Henry
4 Jones served as a pastor in Massachusetts and Rhode Island
5 African Methodist Episcopal churches and eventually settled down
6 for eight years at St. Paul's African Methodist Episcopal Church
7 in Columbus, Ohio, where he was successful at championing for
8 the hiring of African-American teachers for the first time in
9 the history of the City of Columbus during his eight-year tenure
10 on the Columbus Board of Education; and

11 WHEREAS, Soon after Mr. Jones was elected president of
12 Wilberforce University and in 1912 became the 38th bishop of the
13 African Methodist Episcopal Church, where his leadership in this
14 capacity helped further the growth of Paul Quinn College, as
15 well as reestablishing Wilberforce's Shorter Hall and retiring
16 the debt of Wilberforce University; and

17 WHEREAS, In 1928 Joshua Henry Jones was assigned to the First
18 Episcopal District in Philadelphia and served as pastor at the
19 Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church located at 6th
20 and Lombard Streets in Society Hill; and

21 WHEREAS, While in Philadelphia, Mr. Jones continued his
22 generous work to the community by borrowing against his personal
23 funds to save many African Methodist Episcopal churches
24 throughout the city and this Commonwealth, and also purchased a
25 new publishing house for the Mother Bethel African Methodist
26 Episcopal Church after its near demise in 1930; and

27 WHEREAS, Joshua Henry Jones was instrumental in establishing
28 his namesake church, Jones Tabernacle, in North Philadelphia,
29 where Bishop Richard R. Wright, Jr., father of former
30 Philadelphia Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Ruth Wright Hayre,

1 served as the first pastor of this historic landmark site; and

2 WHEREAS, Mr. Jones passed away November 24, 1932, and

3 throughout his lifetime had overcome adversity, advanced the

4 African Methodist Episcopal bishopric and became an influential

5 African-American leader whose ideals and manner ring true today;

6 therefore be it

7 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize June

8 19, 2005, as "Bishop Joshua Henry Jones Day" in Pennsylvania and

9 continue to acknowledge his achievements and contributions to

10 this Commonwealth.