
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 47

Session of
2007

INTRODUCED BY WILLIAMS, BISHOP, MCGEEHAN, WALKO, SAYLOR, BOYD,
BUXTON, CALTAGIRONE, CRUZ, DONATUCCI, EACHUS, GALLOWAY,
GEORGE, GOODMAN, GRUCELA, HENNESSEY, JAMES, KIRKLAND, MANN,
McCALL, MELIO, MENSCH, PALLONE, PARKER, PETRI, RAMALEY,
READSHAW, REICHLEY, ROSS, SANTONI, SIPTROTH, SURRA, THOMAS,
WATERS, YOUNGBLOOD, BELFANTI, HESS AND MANTZ,
FEBRUARY 5, 2007

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
FEBRUARY 5, 2007

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing February 1, 2007, as "National Freedom Day" in
2 Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Major Richard Robert Wright, Sr., a former slave,
4 fought to have a day when freedom for all Americans is
5 celebrated; and

6 WHEREAS, Major Wright served as an officer in the Spanish-
7 American War and was the first African American appointed by
8 President William McKinley to be the paymaster of the United
9 States Army; and

10 WHEREAS, Among his many accomplishments, Major Wright founded
11 a high school and the National Freedom Day Association and owned
12 several newspapers; and

13 WHEREAS, Major Wright served as the first president of the
14 Georgia State Industrial College for Colored Youth in Athens,
15 Georgia, now known as Savannah State University; and

1 WHEREAS, In 1921 Major Wright founded the Citizens and
2 Southern Bank and Trust Company, one of the most successful
3 African-American business endeavors in Philadelphia history; and

4 WHEREAS, As president of the Citizens and Southern Bank and
5 Trust Company, Major Wright encouraged African-American
6 investment and sponsored numerous causes within the African-
7 American community until his death in 1947; and

8 WHEREAS, As president of the Citizens and Southern Bank and
9 Trust Company, Major Wright worked hard to establish February 1
10 as "National Freedom Day"; and

11 WHEREAS, On February 1, 1941, Major Wright invited national
12 and local leaders to meet in Philadelphia to formulate plans to
13 set aside February 1 of each year as "National Freedom Day"
14 because it was on this day in 1865 that President Abraham
15 Lincoln abolished slavery by signing the 13th Amendment to the
16 Constitution of the United States; and

17 WHEREAS, President Harry Truman, recognizing the importance
18 of such a day, signed an Executive Order on June 30, 1948,
19 proclaiming February 1 as "National Freedom Day"; and

20 WHEREAS, Americans of all colors, creeds, cultures, religions
21 and countries of origin share a common love of and respect for
22 freedom as well as a determination to protect their right to
23 freedom through democratic institutions; therefore be it

24 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize
25 February 1, 2007, as "National Freedom Day" in Pennsylvania; and
26 be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commemorate the
28 achievements of Major Richard Robert Wright, Sr., and recognize
29 his efforts to establish a national day commemorating freedom
30 for all people.