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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 273 Session of  
2023

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INTRODUCED BY SMITH-WADE-EL, BELLMON, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, FLEMING, GIRAL, GREEN, KAZEEM, KHAN, MADSEN, MAYES, POWELL, SCOTT, VENKAT, DONAHUE, FREEMAN, A. BROWN, ABNEY, PROBST, SCHLOSSBERG, SANCHEZ, McNEILL, PIELLI, MADDEN, STURLA, SAMUELSON, KINSEY, N. NELSON, KENYATTA, HOHENSTEIN, RABB, KIM, CIRESI, BOROWSKI, DAWKINS, PARKER, MENTZER, SIEGEL, DELLOSO, BULLOCK, BOYD, FRANKEL, BRENNAN, PASHINSKI, SHUSTERMAN, T. DAVIS, VITALI, CEPHAS, M. JONES, STEELE AND GERGELY, DECEMBER 8, 2023

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON TOURISM AND ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, DECEMBER 8, 2023

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A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of February 2024 as "Black History Month"  
2 in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, The contributions of African-American citizens as  
4 scientists, inventors, legislators, farmers, educators,  
5 explorers and countless other professions have positively  
6 impacted every sphere of influence within this Commonwealth; and

7 WHEREAS, In 1915, in response to the dearth of information  
8 that existed in the public domain regarding the feats and  
9 accomplishments of African Americans, Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson,  
10 an African-American historian, founded the Association for the  
11 Study of Negro Life and History, which is now known as the  
12 Association for the Study of African American Life and History  
13 (ASALH); and

14 WHEREAS, In an effort to further build upon the mission and

1 scope of the ASALH, on February 7, 1926, Dr. Woodson designated  
2 the second week of February as "Negro History Week," which was  
3 chosen for the initial weeklong celebration to honor the birth  
4 month of President Abraham Lincoln and abolitionist Frederick  
5 Douglass; and

6 WHEREAS, Dr. Woodson, often referred to as the "Father of  
7 Black History," dedicated his life to the field of African-  
8 American history and encouraged the coordinated teaching and  
9 study of the history of African Americans in our nation's  
10 schools; and

11 WHEREAS, In 1928, ASALH established its first annual theme  
12 for what was then known as "Negro History Week," which was  
13 "Civilization: A World Achievement"; and

14 WHEREAS, Over the course of several decades following the  
15 inception of "Negro History Week," many local municipalities,  
16 colleges and universities across the country began celebrating  
17 the observance in an augmented form as "Black History Month";  
18 and

19 WHEREAS, In 1976, President Gerald Ford officially recognized  
20 and included "Black History Month" as part of the United States  
21 Bicentennial, urging Americans to "seize the opportunity to  
22 honor the too often neglected accomplishments of black Americans  
23 in every area of human endeavor throughout our history"; and

24 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus has always  
25 endeavored to vigorously advocate for the needs of all people of  
26 color in this Commonwealth by acting as a unified voice  
27 concerning the issues that most acutely impact their daily  
28 lives; and

29 WHEREAS, This year's "Black History Month" theme, as  
30 established and adopted by ASALH, is "African Americans and the

1 Arts," spanning the broad, profound and foundational role that  
2 African Americans have played in American visual arts, music,  
3 drama, dance and more; and

4 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth has been home and venue to many of  
5 the great African-American artists, authors and performers of  
6 this country, such as Billie Holiday, Marian Anderson,  
7 Questlove, August Wilson and George Benson, to name a few; and

8 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania's role in shaping many sounds and  
9 movements across America's artistic landscape cannot be fully  
10 acknowledged without naming the pivotal role of Black  
11 Pennsylvanians in transforming music, art and drama; and

12 WHEREAS, "Black History Month" is an opportunity for all  
13 citizens to commemorate the historical hardships and  
14 achievements of African Americans, laud their invaluable  
15 contributions to both our domestic and global community and  
16 acknowledge the sacrifices that African Americans have made on  
17 behalf and in defense of our great nation; therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the  
19 month of February 2024 as "Black History Month" in Pennsylvania.