
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 39 Session of 2017

INTRODUCED BY RABB, DEAN, SCHLOSSBERG, CHARLTON, KINSEY,
J. HARRIS, TOEPEL, SACCONI, READSHAW, VITALI, DIGIROLAMO,
MURT, McCLINTON, SCHWEYER, FRANKEL, MUSTIO, LONGIETTI, LEWIS,
YOUNGBLOOD, BULLOCK, DRISCOLL, RYAN, HARKINS, WHEATLEY,
SONNEY, DUSH, THOMAS, ROEBUCK, FITZGERALD, McNEILL, FREEMAN,
BARRAR, PHILLIPS-HILL, R. BROWN, SAINATO, McCARTER AND
MILLARD, JANUARY 24, 2017

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
JANUARY 24, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life and legacy of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther
2 King, Jr.

3 WHEREAS, People in cities, suburbs and small towns across our
4 diverse nation have joined in homage to the Reverend Dr. Martin
5 Luther King, Jr., who organized and mobilized against and
6 resisted the bigotry, structural inequality and kleptocratic
7 features existing within American society; and

8 WHEREAS, During the national holiday that celebrates his
9 birthday on the third Monday of each January, we honor the
10 radical servant leadership that the Rev. Dr. King consistently
11 embodied in the 1950s and 1960s; and

12 WHEREAS, Our participation in community service and
13 engagement in nonviolent direct action further memorializes the
14 Rev. Dr. King's commitment to securing universal civil rights;
15 and

1 WHEREAS, The prescient expressions of equality and solidarity
2 in the Rev. Dr. King's career-defining speech during the 1963
3 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom also ring true in
4 today's political and social context:

5 When the architects of our Great Republic wrote the
6 magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of
7 Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which
8 every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that
9 all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be
10 guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the
11 pursuit of happiness;

12 and

13 WHEREAS, The Rev. Dr. King did not seek incremental social
14 justice and equality but declared that:

15 It is obvious ... that America has defaulted on this
16 promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are
17 concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation,
18 America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which
19 has come back marked insufficient funds;

20 and

21 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives acknowledges the Rev.
22 Dr. King's refusal "to believe that there are insufficient funds
23 in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation" that should
24 bestow on all Americans "the riches of freedom and the security
25 of justice"; and

26 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives remembers the Rev. Dr.
27 King's enduring affirmation that:

28 Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy....

29 Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of
30 racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the

1 time to make justice a reality for all of God's children;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives affirms its reverence
4 for the pursuit of social, racial, economic and environmental
5 justice in keeping with the Rev. Dr. King's vision and moral
6 courage; and

7 WHEREAS, Lawmakers must enact, fund and ensure compliance
8 with public policy that rises above the interests of those
9 groups and individuals who are inclined to segregate, undermine
10 and degrade what the Rev. Dr. King referred to as "the beloved
11 community"; and

12 WHEREAS, Lawmakers empowered to enact, amend and repeal laws
13 and pass state budgets must likewise generate moral documents
14 for the benefit of this Commonwealth as enshrined in the
15 foundational documents of William Penn and the Constitution of
16 Pennsylvania; and

17 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus, founded
18 in 1973, is one of innumerable organizations established
19 nationwide in the aftermath of the Rev. Dr. King's assassination
20 on April 4, 1968; and

21 WHEREAS, In alliance with this panoply of diverse
22 organizations and in conjunction with the General Assembly, the
23 Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus addresses the issues which
24 challenge systematically marginalized communities; and

25 WHEREAS, Dedicated to the memory of the Rev. Dr. King's
26 vision, integrity and transformational leadership, the
27 Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus advocates for the rights
28 of Pennsylvanians of African descent and allied communities of
29 struggle; therefore be it

30 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives, on behalf of the

1 Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus, honor the life and legacy
2 of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.