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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 999 Session of  
2018

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INTRODUCED BY WARREN, J. McNEILL, NEILSON, DiGIROLAMO, HILL-  
EVANS, DAVIS, MILLARD, MUSTIO, BIZZARRO, STURLA, DRISCOLL,  
TAI, MAHER, COX, SCHLEGEL CULVER, MADDEN, READSHAW, VITALI,  
CALTAGIRONE, DEAN, KORTZ, ROZZI AND FITZGERALD, JUNE 21, 2018

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
JUNE 21, 2018

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A RESOLUTION

1 Commemorating the 150th anniversary of the ratification of the  
2 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States on  
3 July 9, 2018.

4 WHEREAS, Slavery in America began in 1619 when a Dutch ship  
5 brought 20 African slaves ashore in the British colony of  
6 Jamestown, Virginia, which marked the start of nearly 250 years  
7 of slavery in the British colonies and the United States; and

8 WHEREAS, In 1776, the United States Declaration of  
9 Independence stated that "all men are created equal, that they  
10 are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights,  
11 that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of  
12 Happiness," and yet despite this founding principle, the  
13 institution of slavery and denial of basic human rights  
14 continued; and

15 WHEREAS, The United States Supreme Court ruled in 1857 in  
16 *Dred Scott v. Sandford* that Dred Scott, an enslaved man, was not  
17 a citizen of the United States and could not sue for his

1 freedom, and that a person of African descent, whether born free  
2 or formerly enslaved, could not be a citizen of the United  
3 States; and

4 WHEREAS, This decision and the outcry the ruling in *Dred*  
5 *Scott v. Sandford* provoked were contributing factors in the  
6 outbreak of the American Civil War, which, from 1861 to 1865,  
7 engulfed the nation in violent turmoil; and

8 WHEREAS, The 13th Amendment to the Constitution of the United  
9 States, ratified on December 6, 1865, formally abolished slavery  
10 and involuntary servitude within the United States; and

11 WHEREAS, The subsequent ratification of the 14th Amendment to  
12 the Constitution of the United States on July 9, 1868, granted  
13 citizenship to "all persons born or naturalized in the United  
14 States"; and

15 WHEREAS, The 14th Amendment also forbade states from  
16 depriving "any person of life, liberty, or property, without due  
17 process of law" or from denying "to any person within its  
18 jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws," thereby  
19 guaranteeing rights that previously had been denied based on  
20 race or previous condition of servitude; and

21 WHEREAS, The 1925 case *Gitlow v. New York* held that the 1st  
22 Amendment to the Constitution of the United States applies to  
23 individual states through the Due Process Clause in the 14th  
24 Amendment, which marked the first instance in which the Bill of  
25 Rights was applied to the states and signified the importance of  
26 the 14th Amendment in moving society forward; and

27 WHEREAS, The 14th Amendment has been cited in more Supreme  
28 Court cases than any other amendment to the Constitution and has  
29 been vital in upholding equality as a core constitutional value;  
30 therefore be it

1       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commemorate the  
2 150th anniversary of the ratification of the 14th Amendment to  
3 the Constitution of the United States on July 9, 2018.