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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 135 Session of  
2021

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INTRODUCED BY SAPPEY, McNEILL, HILL-EVANS, FREEMAN, HENNESSEY,  
HOHENSTEIN, SCHMITT, ISAACSON, KINSEY, KIRKLAND, SANCHEZ,  
BULLOCK, M. MACKENZIE, GALLOWAY, SAMUELSON AND T. DAVIS,  
SEPTEMBER 1, 2021

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, SEPTEMBER 1, 2021

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A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of September 2021 as "International  
2 Underground Railroad Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania was a strategic and historic location  
4 of freedom through the Underground Railroad; and

5 WHEREAS, Thousands of men and women risked their own freedom  
6 to help freedom seekers escape bondage; and

7 WHEREAS, People such as Basil Biggs, Thomas and Frances  
8 Scroggins Brown, Lucinda Bryant, Charles C. Burleigh, Martin R.  
9 Delany, Robert Douglass, Jr., James Forten, William C.

10 Goodridge, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Dr. Francis J. LeMoyne,  
11 Lucretia Mott, William Nesbit, William Parker, John Peck, Robert  
12 Purvis, Sarah Forten Purvis, Dr. William Rutherford, Abraham  
13 Shadd, Stephen Smith, Thaddeus Stevens, William Still, John  
14 Vashon, Albert Vosburgh, William Whipper, John Greenleaf  
15 Whittier, Lewis Woodson and others devoted their lives to this  
16 cause; and

17 WHEREAS, The American Anti-Slavery Society was an interracial

1 organization dedicated to the entire abolition of slavery in the  
2 United States; and

3 WHEREAS, The American Anti-Slavery Society was founded in  
4 Philadelphia in 1833; and

5 WHEREAS, In 1851, freedom seekers and abolitionists defended  
6 freedom at Christiana in Lancaster County; and

7 WHEREAS, In 1838, when Black men were deprived of their  
8 established right to vote in this Commonwealth, African  
9 Americans in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia and their allies in the  
10 General Assembly advocated for the restoration of  
11 enfranchisement 32 years before the ratification of the 15th  
12 Amendment to the Constitution of the United States restored  
13 voting rights, thus showing that Pennsylvanians valued and  
14 advocated for civil and human rights; and

15 WHEREAS, The Underground Railroad traced across Pennsylvania  
16 with lecturers and a series of safe houses, agents, conductors  
17 and stations, in a clandestine network that helped freedom  
18 seekers realize freedom in Pennsylvania and elsewhere; and

19 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth should show appreciation for the  
20 inspiring efforts of the people of Pennsylvania and all those  
21 from around the world who have committed themselves to document  
22 and share the Underground Railroad through the Pennsylvania  
23 Civil War Sesquicentennial and Quest for Freedom programs that  
24 connected Underground Railroad sites across this Commonwealth,  
25 the National Park Service's National Underground Railroad  
26 Network to Freedom program that lists 51 sites and centers in  
27 Pennsylvania, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and  
28 Cultural Organization's Sites of Memory designations; and

29 WHEREAS, Commonwealth agencies, institutions and  
30 organizations such as the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum

1 Commission, Department of Community and Economic Development,  
2 and the 14 Frederick Douglass Institutes across the Pennsylvania  
3 State System of Higher Education continue to educate young  
4 people about Pennsylvania's role and leadership; and

5 WHEREAS, "International Underground Railroad Month" provides  
6 an opportunity for worldwide open dialogue that illuminates the  
7 hopes that arise from freedom for all people; therefore be it

8 RESOLVED (the Senate concurring), That the General Assembly  
9 of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania designate the month of  
10 September 2021 as "International Underground Railroad Month" in  
11 Pennsylvania; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of  
13 Pennsylvania honor all those who have fought and continue to  
14 fight for the freedom of all peoples.