HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2025-4620, by Representative Donaghy

WHEREAS, Nearly 100 years ago, in 1926, Dr. Carter Woodson advocated that we set aside a special period in February to recognize the history, heritage, and achievements of Black people in the United States; and

WHEREAS, In the bicentennial year of 1976, 50 years after Woodson gave birth to the idea, President Gerald Ford expanded the period from a weeklong observance to the entire month of February, urging all Americans to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history"; and

WHEREAS, Today, in 2025, these types of observances recognizing the contributions and histories of people from a variety of groups and communities are critical to ensure that their histories are no longer obscured, hidden, silenced, or erased; and

WHEREAS, The Black History Month 2025 theme, "African Americans and Labor," reflects on the relationship between Black people's work and their workplaces; and

WHEREAS, This country was built and enriched by hundreds of years of free, forced labor from Black people during slavery; and

WHEREAS, Black people have patriotically fought for this country in every war since its founding, even without full citizenship; and

WHEREAS, Black people often had their work stolen or others have profited from it without credit; and

WHEREAS, Black people's labor, and their allies', was critical to the expansion of the right to vote, access to a quality education, safe housing, and fair wages for all people; and

WHEREAS, The struggle of Black people in this country is one that seeks for all people to be rewarded based on their hard work and merit and ability, rather than judged and held back because of an immutable characteristic; and

WHEREAS, The fight for inclusion, justice, and equity in all aspects of American life still continues today; and

WHEREAS, Black History Month is an opportunity to learn about, thank, and be inspired by all those who came before us and believed in the promise of the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and have never given up on that promise and have worked for centuries to achieve it; and

WHEREAS, We can reflect on the contributions of Black labor leaders who have fought for the rights of all workers here in Washington State, including Tyree Scott, Jacquie Jones-Walsh, Frederick Simmons, and many others, including those who continue to lead the labor movement across our state today; and

WHEREAS, Black culture is American culture, Black history is American history, and Black history is happening right now; and

WHEREAS, The Washington Legislature can be proud to have Black representation since its first session, and today has the largest legislative Black caucus on the West Coast;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State House of Representatives hereby honor and celebrate Black History Month and recognize the legacy and innumerable contributions of Black Americans to our communities, the state of Washington, and the United States of America, not only in February but throughout the whole year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Washington State House of Representatives encourages the celebration of Black History Month in our schools and universities, and in our communities and neighborhoods, to foster a better understanding of that history and its significance here in Washington and throughout this great nation.

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of

Resolution 4620 adopted by the House of Representatives

February 20, 2025

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Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk