

1 A MEMORIAL

2 DECLARING FEBRUARY 11, 2022 "AFRICAN-AMERICAN DAY" IN THE
3 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

4
5 WHEREAS, African-American day is a celebration of the
6 achievements and contributions of African Americans to the
7 history of both New Mexico and the United States; and

8 WHEREAS, New Mexico recognizes the importance of
9 honoring African Americans, having enacted Section 12-5-12
10 NMSA 1978, which states, "The second Friday of February of
11 each year shall be set apart and be known as
12 "African-American day"; and

13 WHEREAS, African-American day is a celebration of the
14 many sacrifices that African Americans have made toward the
15 democracy everyone enjoys today; and

16 WHEREAS, African-American day shall be observed by the
17 people of New Mexico in recognition of those efforts; and

18 WHEREAS, African-American day is celebrated in tandem
19 with Black history month; and

20 WHEREAS, the celebration of African-American day is also
21 a time for people to reflect upon the need to diversify
22 thinking and strategic planning to ensure that all voices are
23 heard in decisions that affect New Mexico and New Mexicans;
24 and

25 WHEREAS, African-American day provides an opportunity to

1 honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black
2 Americans in every area of endeavor throughout history; and

3 WHEREAS, Black history month should not be treated as
4 though it is separate from the collective American history or
5 as though Black history month is merely a compilation of
6 greatest hits, ranging from the March on Washington to some
7 of the most memorable court cases inspired by African
8 Americans' experiences, but rather as a day that is focused
9 on the shared experiences of all African Americans commingled
10 into a recipe that everyone can appreciate; and

11 WHEREAS, the African American community in New Mexico
12 has a compelling legacy that dates back to 1539, when
13 Esteban, a Spanish Moor from North Africa, traveled to New
14 Mexico seeking gold; and

15 WHEREAS, after the civil war, from three thousand three
16 hundred to three thousand eight hundred African American
17 soldiers, proudly known as the buffalo soldiers, a term given
18 to the troops by Native Americans, were garrisoned at eleven
19 different forts throughout the territory of New Mexico; and

20 WHEREAS, today, New Mexico has a vibrant African
21 American community with a population of approximately fifty-
22 five thousand Black people, according to the United States
23 census bureau; and

24 WHEREAS, this past year has seen increased attention on
25 police violence, systemic racism and disproportionate health

1 outcomes faced by African Americans; and

2 WHEREAS, efforts to advance racial equality and civil
3 engagement are urgent in light of recent history; and

4 WHEREAS, everyone is encouraged to celebrate African-
5 American day by honoring the contributions that African
6 Americans have made throughout history, while also
7 recognizing that the fight for racial justice and equality
8 continues to this day;

9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
10 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that February 11,
11 2022 be designated "African-American Day" in the house of
12 representatives; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
14 transmitted to the governor, the executive director of the New
15 Mexico office on African American affairs, the board chair of
16 the African American museum and cultural center of New Mexico
17 and the president of the national association for the
18 advancement of colored people-New Mexico. _____

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