

House Bill 178

By: Representatives Hutchinson of the 106th, Scott of the 76th, Willis of the 55th, Adesanya of the 43rd, Glaize of the 67th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 4 of Title 1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 holidays and observances, so as to designate February 21 as "John Lewis Day"; to provide
3 legislative findings; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other
4 purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 **SECTION 1.**

7 The General Assembly finds that:

8 (1) United States Representative John Lewis, a person of tremendous courage and
9 strength, dedicated his life to working for equality and the betterment of the United States
10 of America;

11 (2) Mr. Lewis showed bravery and leadership by becoming one of the 13 original
12 Freedom Riders and leading the "Bloody Sunday" march across the Edmund Pettus
13 Bridge in Selma, Alabama. He was beaten, clubbed, bloodied, and arrested for his
14 activism, but he remained undeterred;

15 (3) Before being elected to office, Mr. Lewis was appointed by President Jimmy Carter
16 to serve as associate director of ACTION, a federal volunteer agency;

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17 (4) Mr. Lewis's long career as an elected public servant began in 1981 when he was
18 elected to Atlanta's City Council;

19 (5) In 1986, Mr. Lewis was elected to represent Georgia's 5th District in the U.S.
20 Congress. Congressman Lewis's struggle for justice and equality continued throughout
21 his 17 terms in Congress, and he never stopped demonstrating for what he knew was
22 right, including leading sit-ins on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives;

23 (6) Congressman Lewis is a source of inspiration for Georgia, the United States of
24 America, and the entire world;

25 (7) Our state and our country are a better, more just place because of Congressman
26 Lewis, who left us with the belief that "When you see something that is not right, not fair,
27 not just, you have to speak up. You have to say something; you have to do something.";

28 (8) February 21, 2023, will be the eighty-third anniversary of Congressman Lewis's
29 birth; and

30 (9) It is abundantly fitting and proper that the State of Georgia appropriately recognize
31 and honor the tremendous impact Congressman Lewis had as a public servant and civil
32 rights leader by designating his birthday as "John Lewis Day" in Georgia.

33 **SECTION 2.**

34 Chapter 4 of Title 1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to holidays and
35 observances, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

36 "1-4-26.

37 February 21 of each year is designated as 'John Lewis Day' in Georgia."

38 **SECTION 3.**

39 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.