

House Resolution 1216

By: Representatives Cannon of the 58th, Smyre of the 135th, Beverly of the 143rd, Schofield of the 60th, and Thomas of the 39th

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the 100th anniversary of Ebenezer Baptist Church's Heritage Sanctuary; and for
2 other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia celebrates the 100th anniversary of Ebenezer Baptist
4 Church's (EBC) Heritage Sanctuary, the site in which Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. served as
5 co-pastor with his father, Martin Luther King Sr., senior pastor (1931-1975); and

6 WHEREAS, EBC was founded in 1886 under the leadership of the Reverend John A. Parker,
7 who served as Ebenezer's first at the original site on Airline Street from 1886 to 1894; and

8 WHEREAS, Ebenezer Baptist Church grew as a congregation in the years leading up to
9 World War I, and as part of the increasing segregation in of the city of Atlanta after 1906,
10 Rev. Adam Daniel Williams, Ebenezer's senior pastor (1894-1931), began searching for a
11 new location away from downtown; and

12 WHEREAS, Ebenezer Baptist acquired its new property at Auburn Avenue in 1913 and the
13 site's basement was finished and occupied in the following. The building permit was finally
14 marked as "completed" in 1922; and

15 WHEREAS, it was at the Heritage Sanctuary that Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was baptized.
16 After giving a trial sermon to the congregation at Ebenezer at the age of 19, Martin was
17 ordained as a minister; and

18 WHEREAS, in 1960, Dr. Martin Luther Jr. became a co-pastor of Ebenezer. He remained
19 in that position until his death in 1968. As a final farewell to his spiritual home, Dr. Martin
20 Luther King Jr.'s funeral was held in the church; and

21 WHEREAS, the Rev. Martin Luther King Sr. retired on August 1, 1975, after 44 years of
22 tremendous service to EBC and the world; the congregation of EBC called Dr. Joseph L.
23 Roberts Jr. to be its fourth senior pastor, and he led the congregation in the construction of
24 a new sanctuary across the street from the historic Ebenezer site ("Heritage") in 1999; and

25 WHEREAS, in 2001, thanks to a Save America's Treasures Grant and the contributions of
26 many individuals and corporations, the National Park Service began the restoration of
27 historic Ebenezer Baptist Church; and

28 WHEREAS, the project restored the appearance of the sanctuary and fellowship hall to the
29 1960-68 period when Dr. King served as co-pastor with his father. Special work items
30 included preservation of stain glass windows, restoration of furnishings, repair of balcony
31 structural system, rehabilitation of restrooms, installation of a lightning protection system,
32 improvement of site drainage, and restoration of a sidewalk, baptistery, and pipe organ and
33 its antiphonal; and

34 WHEREAS, Ebenezer Baptist Church's Heritage Sanctuary today hosts visitors from all over
35 the world daily who come to this historical site to learn about the church's legacy of the fight
36 for civil and human rights; and

37 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia is honored to recognize EBC's Horizon Sanctuary 100th
38 anniversary and celebrate the church's legacy of spiritual and numerical growth; with a
39 congregation of over 6,000, EBC continues to serve the Atlanta community in the Martin
40 Luther King Jr. National Historic Site.

41 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
42 the members of this body recognize and honor the 100th anniversary of Ebenezer Baptist
43 Church's Heritage Sanctuary and extend sincere best wishes for many more years of
44 successful fellowship and service to the Lord.

45 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
46 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to
47 Ebenezer Baptist Church.