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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

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SENATE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING FEBRUARY OF 2022, AS "BLACK HISTORY MONTH" IN THE STATE  
OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Senator Tiara T. Mack

Date Introduced: February 15, 2022

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1           WHEREAS, Throughout the history of America, truly significant African-American  
2 contributions to the economy, social growth, sciences, and arts in this great nation have all too  
3 often been ignored. In recognition of this plethora of major accomplishments made by men and  
4 women of African ancestry, the month of February is celebrated as "Black History Month" across  
5 the nation; and

6           WHEREAS, African-Americans were first brought to America forcibly. They were  
7 enslaved, faced inhuman cruelty, and were subjected to injustices beyond understanding. Families  
8 were torn apart, lynching went unpunished, and segregation and denial of fundamental  
9 constitutional rights and protections went on for decades; and

10           WHEREAS, Though these men, women and children suffered immense tragedies and  
11 social inequalities, they also persevered, and their triumphs and contributions to the economic,  
12 artistic, literary, scientific, and technological advancement of our country are significant and  
13 momentous; and

14           WHEREAS, African-Americans have been an integral part of Rhode Island's social,  
15 political, and economic development from its beginning as a British colony, to its inclusion in the  
16 formation of the United States, to the rich diversity of today's Ocean State; and

17           WHEREAS, The systemic gaps that exist and continue to prevent the Black community  
18 from creating generational wealth, for example, the existing home ownership gap between the  
19 African-American community and the rest of American society must be recognized; and

1           WHEREAS, The United States and particularly the State of Rhode Island owe a debt of  
2 gratitude to our African-American citizens and their forefathers, whose documented  
3 achievements have too long gone unrecognized; and

4           WHEREAS, The theme for this year's celebration of Black History Month is "Black  
5 Health and Wellness." This theme resonates for many given the current Covid-19 Pandemic and  
6 the racial disparities that exist within America Healthcare. Observances throughout the month of  
7 February will honor Black health pioneers such as Daniel Hale Williams, a renowned cardiologist  
8 who performed the world's first successful open heart surgery in 1893, and Rebecca Lee  
9 Crumpler, who in 1864 became the first Black woman in the United States to receive a medical  
10 degree. Also, communities are being encouraged to honor and recognize the many doulas,  
11 midwives, naturopaths, herbalists, and others who have worked tirelessly to improve the health  
12 and well-being of Black Americans; now, therefore be it

13           RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby proudly proclaims  
14 February as "Black History Month", and furthermore recognizes and applauds the sacrifices and  
15 myriad contributions made by African-American men and women throughout this great nation's  
16 history; and be it further

17           RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
18 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Rhode Island Black Heritage Society.

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