

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 727

To establish a National Council on African American History and Culture within the National Endowment for the Humanities, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 1, 2023

Mr. MFUME (for himself, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. MCBATH, Ms. NORTON, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. BROWN, Mr. EVANS, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. BOWMAN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CARSON, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. THANEDAR, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Ms. TITUS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. HAYES, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE, Ms. BUSH, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. IVEY, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. JACOBS, Mr. NADLER, Ms. CROCKETT, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. STEVENS, and Ms. MENG) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To establish a National Council on African American History and Culture within the National Endowment for the Humanities, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “National Council on
3 African American History and Culture Act of 2023”.

4 **SEC. 2. COUNCIL ON AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND**
5 **CULTURE.**

6 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established in the
7 National Endowment for the Humanities a National
8 Council on African American History and Culture (re-
9 ferred to in this section as the “Council”).

10 (b) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

11 (1) **NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.**—The Council
12 shall be composed of 12 members appointed by the
13 President, by and with the advice and consent of the
14 Senate.

15 (2) **QUALIFICATIONS.**—The members of the
16 Council shall be individuals who—

17 (A) are selected from among private citi-
18 zens of the United States who are recognized
19 for their broad knowledge of, expertise in, or
20 commitment to the preservation and celebration
21 of African-American history and culture;

22 (B) are not currently employees of the
23 Federal Government; and

24 (C) have established records of distin-
25 guished service, scholarship, or creativity.

1 (3) CONSIDERATIONS.—In appointing members
2 to the Council under paragraph (1), the President—

3 (A) shall give due regard to equitable rep-
4 resentation of women, people of color, and indi-
5 viduals with disabilities who are involved in the
6 humanities; and

7 (B) shall select such members in a manner
8 that ensures a comprehensive representation of
9 the views of scholars and professional practi-
10 tioners in the humanities and of the public
11 throughout the United States.

12 (4) CHAIRPERSON; VICE CHAIRPERSON.—The
13 Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Council
14 shall be designated by the President from among the
15 members of the Council. The Vice Chairperson shall
16 act as Chairperson in the absence of the Chair-
17 person.

18 (5) TERM OF OFFICE; VACANCIES; REAPPOINT-
19 MENT.—

20 (A) IN GENERAL.—Each member shall be
21 appointed for a term of five years, except as
22 provided in subparagraphs (B) and (C).

23 (B) TERMS OF INITIAL APPOINTEES.—As
24 designated by the President at the time of the

1 appointment, of the members first appointed to
2 the Council under paragraph (1)—

3 (i) six shall be appointed for terms of
4 three years; and

5 (ii) six shall be appointed for terms of
6 five years.

7 (C) VACANCIES.—Any member appointed
8 to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration
9 of the term for which the member's predecessor
10 was appointed shall be appointed only for the
11 remainder of that term. A member may serve
12 after the expiration of that member's term until
13 a successor has taken office.

14 (D) REAPPOINTMENT.—No member shall
15 be eligible for reappointment during the two-
16 year period following the expiration of such
17 member's term.

18 (6) BASIC PAY.—

19 (A) RATES OF PAY.—Members shall re-
20 ceive compensation at a rate of 50 percent of
21 the daily rate of the highest rate of basic pay
22 payable for the senior-level positions classified
23 above GS-15 pursuant to section 5108 of title
24 5, United States Code, for each day (including
25 travel time) during which they are engaged in

1 the actual performance of duties vested in the
2 Council.

3 (B) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Each member
4 shall receive travel expenses, including per diem
5 in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with appli-
6 cable provisions under subchapter 1 of chapter
7 57 of title 5, United States Code.

8 (7) QUORUM.—Nine members of the Council
9 shall constitute a quorum. The Council cannot hold
10 hearings without a full quorum.

11 (8) MEETINGS.—The Council shall meet at the
12 call of the Chairperson but not less frequently than
13 twice during each calendar year.

14 (c) DUTIES.—The duties of the Council shall be—

15 (1) to prepare an annual report to be submitted
16 to the Chairperson of the National Endowment for
17 the Humanities on the work of the National Endow-
18 ment to preserve and celebrate African-American
19 history and culture;

20 (2) to gather timely and authoritative informa-
21 tion concerning historical developments and cultural
22 trends in African-American history and culture, as
23 well as to monitor the work of museums and organi-
24 zations dedicated to the preservation of African-
25 American history and culture, and to analyze and in-

1 interpret such information for the purpose of deter-
2 mining whether national policy is necessary to fur-
3 ther support those efforts;

4 (3) to evaluate the various programs and activi-
5 ties of the National Endowment for the Humanities
6 for the purpose of determining the extent to which
7 such programs and activities are contributing, and
8 the extent to which they are not contributing, to the
9 successful preservation and celebration of African-
10 American history and culture, and to make rec-
11 ommendations to the President with respect to such
12 programs and activities;

13 (4) to develop and recommend to the Chair-
14 person national policies to foster and promote the
15 understanding of African-American history, the pres-
16 ervation of African-American culture, and the cele-
17 bration of African Americans as contributors to the
18 country's economic, cultural, and political success;
19 and

20 (5) to make and furnish such studies, reports
21 thereon, and recommendations with respect to mat-
22 ters of cultural preservation and African-American
23 history as the Chairperson may request.

24 (d) APPLICABILITY OF FACA.—Section 14 of the
25 Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.; relating

1 to termination of advisory committees) shall not apply to
2 the Council.

3 (e) TERMINATION.—The Council shall terminate 10
4 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

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