

1 A MEMORIAL

2 DECLARING FEBRUARY 9, 2024 "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 "African-  
12 American day"; and

13 WHEREAS, African-American day is a day to reflect on 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 for diversity in  
22 thinking and strategic planning as laws and policies are  
23 developed to ensure that all voices are heard in decisions  
24 that affect New Mexico and New Mexicans; and

25 WHEREAS, African-American day provides an opportunity to

1 honor the often-forgotten accomplishments of Black Americans  
2 to every important outcome that makes up the history of the  
3 state and the country; and

4 WHEREAS, Black history month should not be treated as  
5 though it is separate from the collective American history or  
6 as though Black history month is merely a compilation of  
7 greatest hits, ranging from the badges and incidents of  
8 slavery to some of the most important supreme court cases  
9 that have created precedents inspired by African American  
10 experiences, but rather as a day that is focused on the  
11 shared experiences of African Americans blended into a recipe  
12 that creates a unique flavor of diversity with a  
13 multicultural experience that everyone can appreciate; and

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

18 WHEREAS, after the civil war, thousands of African  
19 American soldiers, also known as the buffalo soldiers, were  
20 garrisoned at eleven different forts throughout the territory  
21 of New Mexico; and

22 WHEREAS, today, New Mexico has a vibrant African  
23 American community with a growing population that is still  
24 not fully embraced, as evidenced by disproportionate health  
25 outcomes, housing disparities and high unemployment; and

1           WHEREAS, efforts to advance racial equality and civil  
2 engagement continue to be urgent priorities; and

3           WHEREAS, the great contributions that African Americans  
4 have made to both the history of New Mexico and the history  
5 of the United States should be celebrated and acknowledged  
6 while also recognizing that the fight for racial justice and  
7 equality continues everyday;

8           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
9 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that February 9,  
10 2024 be designated "African-American Day" in the house of  
11 representatives; and

12           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
13 transmitted to the governor, the executive director of the  
14 office on African American affairs, the president of the  
15 university of New Mexico, the president of the New Mexico  
16 black caucus and the president of the New Mexico state  
17 conference of the national association for the advancement of  
18 colored people.

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