

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 95-4628, by Representatives Mielke, Carlson, Robertson, Poulsen, Campbell, Smith, Silver, Casada, D. Schmidt and Dyer

WHEREAS, February marks the observance of Black History Month and provides an opportunity to commemorate the early black pioneers who came to Washington state seeking a better life and an improved standard of living for themselves and their families, and who made valuable contributions to the growth and vitality of this great state; and

WHEREAS, George Bush, an early black pioneer, came to the Washington Territory in the early 1830's, thrived as a hunter, trapper, and later as a prosperous farmer, helped settle and tame the Thurston County area for later pioneers, and exemplified the valuable contributions and the spirit of rugged, determined individualism that helped make the state of Washington great; and

WHEREAS, George Washington, an early black pioneer, came to the Washington Territory in the 1850's, steadfastly guided by his acknowledged reliance on God, staked a claim on the confluence of the Chehalis and Skookumchuck rivers, encouraged the settlement of the area later to become known as Centralia, later started several successful businesses in the area, and exemplified the potency of entrepreneurial effort that helped make the state of Washington great; and

WHEREAS, James Sheppardson, an early black pioneer, came to the Washington Territory in the 1880's, one year before statehood, became active in the Republican party, and later became a lobbyist at the state capitol. Upon being recruited by the Northern Pacific Railway Company, he implemented the philosophy of hard work, dedication, and perseverance as the key to achievement and was instrumental in maintaining the success of that early frontier business venture. James Sheppardson exemplified the unwavering personal motivation that helped make the state of Washington great; and

WHEREAS, John Gayton, an early black pioneer, arrived in Washington in the 1880's, the year the Washington Territory proudly and boldly took its place alongside other sister states in the union as the great state of Washington, became the first black federal bailiff for the United States District Court, and established the East Madison Young Men's Christian Association as well as the first black Methodist Church. He credited the value of family as being of primary importance, and exemplified the personal values that helped make the state of Washington great; and

WHEREAS, William Bush, the son of the early black pioneer George Bush, served as the first elected black representative in the first Legislature of this state in 1889, and exemplified the personal commitment to civic responsibilities that helped make the state of Washington great; and

WHEREAS, Horace Cayton, an early black pioneer, became, in the late 1880's, Seattle's first black journalist, established the Seattle Republican, Seattle's first black newspaper devoted to political news, and exemplified the learned endeavors that helped make the state of Washington great;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the state of Washington hereby commemorate Black History Month and recognize the legacy of hard work and accomplishment that early black pioneers left and the heritage of pride and personal sacrifice that contributed to the growth and vitality of this great state and that remains a beacon of inspiration to others of all colors and races today.

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of  
Resolution 4628 adopted by the House of Representatives  
February 20, 1995.

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Timothy A. Martin, Chief Clerk