

By: Thompson

H.R. No. 420

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The country's largest and oldest civil rights
2 organization, the National Association for the Advancement of
3 Colored People, is marking the 100th anniversary of its founding on
4 February 12, 2009; and

5 WHEREAS, In the summer of 1908, the nation was shocked by
6 accounts of mob violence that raged for two days against African
7 Americans in Springfield, Illinois, the birthplace of President
8 Abraham Lincoln; a multiracial group of activists came together in
9 response to this outrage and formed the NAACP in New York on
10 February 12, 1909, which would have been Lincoln's 100th birthday;
11 the next year, founding officer W. E. B. Du Bois, a prominent
12 intellectual, launched the association's widely influential
13 magazine, *The Crisis*; and

14 WHEREAS, The NAACP established itself as a crucial legal
15 advocate with a series of early court battles, and in 1915 it
16 vigorously protested the inflammatory film *Birth of a Nation*, which
17 glorified the Ku Klux Klan and perpetuated demeaning stereotypes;
18 membership in the NAACP grew rapidly, from around 9,000 in 1917 to
19 90,000 three years later, with more than 300 branches across the
20 country; and

21 WHEREAS, After persistent pressure by the NAACP, President
22 Woodrow Wilson made a public statement against lynching in 1918;
23 the organization continued to battle this heinous practice
24 throughout the 1920s, leading a national debate that brought about

1 a sharp decline in such violence; in the 1930s, NAACP members
2 blocked the nomination of a segregationist judge to the U.S.
3 Supreme Court, and association lawyers Charles Houston and Thurgood
4 Marshall won the legal battle to admit an African American student
5 to the University of Maryland; and

6 WHEREAS, Future U.S. Supreme Court Justice Marshall later
7 brought the NAACP one of its greatest legal victories with *Brown v.*
8 *the Board of Education*, the landmark case that outlawed segregation
9 in public schools; the organization joined with other groups in the
10 heroic movement ignited by NAACP member Rosa Parks, and its
11 lobbying bureau in Washington helped advance integration of the
12 armed forces and passage of the Civil Rights Acts of 1957, 1964, and
13 1968, as well as the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and

14 WHEREAS, Through the years, this groundbreaking organization
15 has continued to work tirelessly to end bigotry and discrimination;
16 today, more than half a million members advocate for civil rights in
17 their communities and monitor barriers to opportunity in the public
18 and private sectors; as the NAACP marks its milestone 100th
19 anniversary, president and chief executive officer Benjamin Todd
20 Jealous has affirmed its commitment to human rights and announced
21 heightened efforts in behalf of all Americans to end disparities in
22 educational attainment, income, and health; and

23 WHEREAS, The NAACP has played a transformational role in
24 American history, and through their courage and tenacity, its
25 members and distinguished leaders have demonstrated profound
26 allegiance to our nation's founding principles of liberty,
27 equality, and justice; now, therefore, be it

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1 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
2 Legislature hereby congratulate the National Association for the
3 Advancement of Colored People on its centennial and commend the
4 organization for its remarkable record of achievement.