

By: Turner

H.R. No. 2579

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, A monument in honor of the African Americans who
2 served in the Texas Legislature between 1868 and 1900 and in the
3 Constitutional Conventions of 1868-1869 and 1875 was unveiled on
4 the grounds of the Texas State Cemetery in March 2010, and it has
5 since served to educate and inspire countless people; and

6 WHEREAS, Following emancipation in June 1865, Black Codes
7 were passed by several cities in Texas to restrict the rights of
8 African Americans; it was not until 1867, with the intervention of
9 Congress and the U.S. military, that African Americans began the
10 transition to freedom in earnest; and

11 WHEREAS, By the end of the 1800s, 52 African Americans had
12 served in 2 constitutional conventions and 14 legislatures; before
13 discriminatory laws and practices succeeded, around the turn of the
14 20th century, in excluding blacks once again from political life in
15 Texas, these men engaged in the most pressing issues of the day and
16 worked for the betterment of their communities and the benefit of
17 all Texans; and

18 WHEREAS, Among the critical needs these legislators sought to
19 address were the safeguarding of African American voting rights and
20 the defense of blacks against widespread violence, the provision of
21 educational opportunity, the protection of both skilled and
22 agricultural workers, the reform of the prison system, and the
23 defense of the frontier; black legislators also fought to end
24 segregation in railroad passenger cars and to eliminate the poll

1 tax; their lasting achievements included the creation of Texas
2 Agricultural and Mechanical College and Prairie View Normal
3 Institute; and

4 WHEREAS, Representing a wide variety of backgrounds,
5 experience, and occupations, these dedicated public servants
6 advocated tirelessly in behalf of civil rights for all Texans, and
7 the African American Legislators Monument at the Texas State
8 Cemetery pays fitting tribute to their memory; now, therefore, be
9 it

10 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas
11 Legislature hereby commemorate the one-year anniversary of the
12 unveiling of the African American Legislators Monument at the Texas
13 State Cemetery and extend sincere appreciation to all those
14 involved in bringing the project to fruition.