

By: Reynolds

H.R. No. 719

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Each year, myriad events and activities signal the
2 celebration of February as Black History Month, and commemorations
3 in 2015 coincide with the 140th anniversary of the birth year of
4 Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson, the eminent African American historian
5 who, more than anyone, is responsible for this observance; and

6 WHEREAS, Born in Virginia in 1875, Carter Woodson was the
7 eldest son of two former slaves, Anna Eliza and James Woodson; he
8 received little schooling as a child, spending most of his time
9 doing farm work to help support his family, and in his teens he
10 became a coal miner; when he at last entered high school at the age
11 of 20, he proved to be such a fine student that he finished in two
12 years; this gifted and determined young man went on to attend Berea
13 College and earn bachelor's and master's degrees from the
14 University of Chicago, and in 1912, he became the second African
15 American, after W. E. B. Du Bois, to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard
16 University; and

17 WHEREAS, Dr. Woodson dedicated his career as a scholar to the
18 study and dissemination of African American history, working to
19 ensure that it was taught in schools and universities; in 1915, he
20 helped to found the Association for the Study of Negro Life and
21 History (ASNLH), now known as the Association for the Study of
22 African American Life and History, and the following year he
23 launched the highly regarded *Journal of Negro History*, today *The*
24 *Journal of African American History*; he served as a dean at Howard

1 University and at the West Virginia Collegiate Institute, and he
2 published more than a dozen books, including his famous critique,
3 *The Mis-Education of the Negro*; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1926, Dr. Woodson and the ASNLH sponsored the
5 first Negro History Week, choosing the second week in February
6 because it encompassed the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and
7 Abraham Lincoln; Dr. Woodson's and the association's efforts
8 inspired schools and communities to sponsor local events, establish
9 history clubs, and host lectures and performances, and over the
10 following decades, mayors across the nation began issuing Negro
11 History Week proclamations each February; and

12 WHEREAS, In the 1960s, the civil rights movement and a
13 growing acknowledgment of African American contributions to the
14 development of this country led many colleges to devote a full month
15 to the study and celebration of black history, and in 1976,
16 President Gerald R. Ford became the first president to recognize
17 February as Black History Month; every president since then has
18 followed suit, bringing to fruition Dr. Woodson's dream of making
19 African American history one of the foundational stories of
20 American history and culture; and

21 WHEREAS, By the time of his death in 1950, Dr. Carter G.
22 Woodson had created a body of scholarship that helped bring the
23 long-neglected history of African Americans into the full light of
24 day, and his role in the creation of Black History Month continues
25 to inspire Americans of all races and every generation; now,
26 therefore, be it

27 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 84th Texas

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1 Legislature hereby commemorate Black History Month 2015 and pay
2 tribute to the life and achievements of Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson.