



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
GARY HEBL
46TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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Rep Hebl's Statement on Black History Month

(MADISON) – Today Rep. Gary Hebl (D-Sun Prairie) released the following statement recognizing Black History Month:

This year marks 400 years since the arrival of the first enslaved Africans into what is now Virginia. We must remember the human cost of chattel slavery. Though the United States is almost 243 years old, slavery was still legal in this country just two lifetimes ago. The Voting Rights Act, codifying full voting rights for all regardless of race, was passed just 54 years ago. Black America still feels the effects of a system that has enslaved and discriminated against them for hundreds of years. We must recognize that fact and work to better our nation.

Black History Month is one month out of the year when we bring to the forefront and recognize the contributions that black Americans have made to the United States. Their hard labor, scientific advances and cultural contributions have made the United States of America a better country. Black leaders have often brought about changes that rankled their contemporaries, but we now recognize them to be on the right side of history.

We honor black leaders such as Thurgood Marshall, John Lewis, Martin Luther King, Jr., Jackie Robinson, and former President Barack Obama, as well as Wisconsin's own black leaders such as former Secretary of State Vel Phillips, current Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes, Superintendent of Milwaukee Public Schools Darianne Driver, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Carolyn Stanford Taylor, and football player Colin Kaepernick.

Black history is American history. It's important to remember the sacrifices made to our country by African Americans as well as to keep in mind that the struggle is not in the past. It continues to this day, and we must do all that we can to make sure everyone in American rises to equal footing in society.

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