



2021 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

1 **Relating to:** proclaiming February 2021 as Black History Month.

2 Whereas, Black History Month provides a deliberate opportunity to reflect on
3 the common humanity underlying all people and to raise awareness and foster
4 respect for the heritage and contributions of people of African descent; and

5 Whereas, this year marks over 400 years since the arrival of enslaved Africans
6 in Virginia. The existence of Africans in North America can be traced back to 1525,
7 and through 1866 the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade is estimated to have ensnared
8 more than 12 million African people, with an estimated 10 million surviving the
9 unconscionable Middle Passage, landing in North America, the Caribbean, and
10 South America; and

11 Whereas, Wisconsin history first references African descendants in a speech
12 given in 1725 by a chief of the Illinois Indians, in which he said, “a negro belonging
13 to Monsieur de Boisbriant” at Green Bay; and

14 Whereas, the United States has recognized black history annually since
15 February 12, 1926, first as “Negro History Week” and later as “Black History Month,”

1 by noted Harvard scholar and historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson, celebrating the
2 ethnic and racial diversity that enriches and strengthens our nation; and

3 Whereas, both enslaved and free people of African descent have participated in
4 every aspect of America's effort to secure, protect, and advance the cause of freedom
5 and civil rights, and have stories that are an inspiration to all citizens, that reflect
6 the triumph of the human spirit, and offer the hopes of everyday people to rise above
7 both prejudice and circumstance and to build lives of dignity; and

8 Whereas, people of African descent or African Americans have made
9 measurable differences in their respective industries, people such as:

10 • **Dr. Kwasi Obeng**—first African American to serve as chief of staff for the
11 Madison Common Council;

12 • **Sabrina Madison**—Black Women's Wellness pioneer of change in Black
13 Women's Health and Black Women's Leadership Development;

14 • **Naomi Carter**—first African American nurse in Madison;

15 • **Jacob Blake Sr., Jacob Blake Jr., and Justin Blake**—police brutality
16 victim and family of the victim;

17 • **Khalil Coleman**—law enforcement reform activist, founder of CLTC, and
18 author;

19 • **Vaun Mayes**—Milwaukee community activist and founder of Parks MKE, a
20 nonprofit organization;

21 • **The People's Revolution**—Black Lives Matter and government
22 accountability organization; a global network that builds power to bring justice,
23 healing, and freedom to Black **people** across the globe;

24 • **Tracey Dent**—activist, Coalition Against Hate, and CEO of the Peace for
25 Change Alliance;

- 1 • **Tory Lowe**—Wisconsin community activist and member of the Speaker’s
2 Task Force on Racial Disparities;
- 3 • **Rebecca Burrell**—Wisconsin community activist and member of the
4 Speaker’s Task Force on Racial Disparities;
- 5 • **John Givens III**—NAACP Youth Council advisor and chair of the Milwaukee
6 Council on Racial Equality;
- 7 • **Grant Gordon**—first African American principal in Milwaukee and is active
8 in the NAACP;
- 9 • **Tony Robinson**—victim of police brutality;
- 10 • **Mattie Reese**—community activist;
- 11 • **Ali Muldrow**—Madison school board member;
- 12 • **Vice President Kamala Devi Harris**—first woman and African American
13 vice president of the United States;
- 14 • **Stacey Yvonne Abrams**—American politician, lawyer, voting rights
15 activist, and author who served in the Georgia House of Representatives;
- 16 • **Henry Louis “Hank” Aaron**—professional baseball player for the
17 Milwaukee Braves and Brewers;
- 18 • **Alvin Cole**—victim of police brutality;
- 19 • **Sylville Smith**—victim of police brutality;
- 20 • **Dontre Hamilton**—victim of police brutality;
- 21 • **Torre Johnson Sr.**—founder of X-Men United and community and youth
22 advocate;
- 23 • **Gab Taylor**—cofounder of Program the Parks and member of Standing Up
24 for Racial Justice MKE;
- 25 • **Daniel Bell**—victim of police brutality;

