SPONSOR: Sen. Brown & Sen. Lockman & Sen. Pinkney on behalf of all Senators & Rep. Bolden & Rep. Chukwuocha & Rep. Cooke & Rep. Dorsey Walker & Rep. K. Johnson & Rep. Lambert & Rep. Minor-Brown & Rep. S. Moore & Rep. Wilson-Anton on behalf of all Representatives

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
151st GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 2

HONORING THE LIFE AND WORK OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. ON THE OCCASION OF "DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY".

WHEREAS, renowned civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was born in Atlanta, Georgia, on January 15, 1929; and

WHEREAS, in 1948, Dr. King received his bachelor of arts degree in sociology from Morehouse College; in 1951, he received his bachelor of divinity degree from Crozer Theological Seminary, as valedictorian and student body president; and in 1955, he was awarded a doctorate in systematic theology from Boston University; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King married Coretta Scott on June 18, 1953; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King was ordained pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1954; and

WHEREAS, 5 days after Rosa Parks' arrest for refusing to comply with segregation on buses in Montgomery, on December 5, 1955, Dr. King was elected president of the Montgomery Improvement Association and the Montgomery Bus Boycott began; and

WHEREAS, during the boycott, Dr. King gained national prominence as an exceptional leader with extraordinary oratorical skills and personal courage; and

WHEREAS, on December 20, 1956, the United States Supreme Court declared Alabama's segregation law unconstitutional and Montgomery buses were desegregated; and

WHEREAS, in 1957, Dr. King and other southern African American ministers founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and elected Dr. King as president; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King led the 1957 Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom in Washington, D.C., and subsequently published his first book titled, "Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story"; and

WHEREAS, in 1959, Dr. King toured India, where he learned more about the philosophy of nonviolence of Mohandas K. Gandhi and developed his own theories about achieving social change through nonviolent resistance; and

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WHEREAS, during mass demonstrations in 1963 organized by Dr. King and his staff in Birmingham, Alabama, images of brutality inflicted on African American demonstrators by police using police dogs and firehoses shocked the world; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech on August 28, 1963, at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King received the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway, in 1964, and the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Section 2000e of Title 42 of the United States Code) was enacted as a direct result of Dr. King's work; and

WHEREAS, in 1965, Dr. King led the march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, and President Lyndon Johnson signed the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Section 10101 of Title 52 of the United States Code); and

WHEREAS, Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement helped change public policy from segregation to integration, resulting in the repeal of the post-Reconstruction era state laws mandating racial segregation in the south known as the Jim Crow Laws and leading to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and other antidiscrimination laws aimed at ending economic, legal, and social segregation in America; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement helped change public policy from legal and socially acceptable discrimination and segregation to an open and accessible policy of racial integration leading to equal participation in and access to primary and higher education, housing, employment, transportation, federal, state, and local governmental elections, and other aspects of public policy relating to human rights; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King dramatically influenced the perspective and worldview of our entire generation; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day represents liberation from cruelty and injustice for many African Americans and other minority groups; and

WHEREAS, the notion of liberty from cruelty and injustice is a concept that resonates with all marginalized groups, be they deaf, Latino American, Asian American, disabled, gay, or other; and

WHEREAS, failure to recognize Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day sends a message of tolerance to bigotry; and

WHEREAS, failure to recognize Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day sends a message of indifference to minority groups; and

WHEREAS, on April 4, 1968, while in Memphis, Tennessee, assisting striking sanitation workers, Dr. King was assassinated; and

WHEREAS, United States Representative John Conyers introduced legislation in Congress 4 days later proposing Dr. King's birthday as a holiday; and

WHEREAS, despite resistance to the creation of a new national holiday, the diligence and perseverance of United States Representative John Conyers and numerous others in pursuing this goal culminated on November 2, 1983, when President Ronald Reagan signed legislation making Dr. King's birthday a national holiday; and

WHEREAS, January 20, 1986, marked the first observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King devoted his life to fighting segregation and injustice by nonviolent means and is an outstanding example of courageous leadership in the face of unrelenting violence and harassment by individuals and governmental institutions; and

WHEREAS, this year, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is observed on January 18, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King is a source of inspiration for all Americans.

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the 151st General Assembly of the State of Delaware, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the General Assembly recognizes and honors the leadership and achievements of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and urges all citizens of the First State to participate fittingly in the observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 18, 2021.

SYNOPSIS

This Senate Concurrent Resolution honors and recognizes the leadership and achievements of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and urges all citizens of the First State to participate fittingly in the observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 18, 2021.

Author: Senator Brown