

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

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By: Delegates Pendergrass and Turner

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Assigned to: Commerce and Government Matters

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Participation of Hispanics in the American Revolution**

3 FOR the purpose of acknowledging the participation of Hispanics in the American
4 Revolution; honoring Hispanic contributions to American independence; urging
5 historians to a deeper examination and dissemination of the role of Hispanics in the
6 accomplishment of American independence; and urging that study of these
7 contributions be made an integral part of the social studies and history courses
8 taught in the State of Maryland.

9 WHEREAS, The independence of the United States was achieved not only from
10 the efforts of American patriots, but also due to the assistance of foreign governments,
11 soldiers, and individuals who supported them; and

12 WHEREAS, In spite of being an important factor in the victory, the participation of
13 Hispanics in the War of Independence is rarely mentioned in the history textbooks of this
14 nation; and

15 WHEREAS, Thousands of Hispanics fought the British and their allies during the
16 American Revolution in what today is the United States, winning crucial battles that
17 eased the pressure of the Crown's forces against the armies of General George
18 Washington; and

19 WHEREAS, Spanish Louisiana Governors Don Luis de Unzaga and Don Bernardo
20 de Galvez provided assistance to the revolutionary governments of Maryland,
21 Pennsylvania, and Virginia in the form of arms, war materiel, and funds to wage
22 campaigns and protect themselves against the British; and

23 WHEREAS, This assistance allowed American General George Rogers Clark to
24 wage his successful campaigns west of those colonies and also was instrumental in
25 preventing the British from capturing Fort Pitt in Pennsylvania and Fort Henry in
26 Virginia, which guarded the last leg of the only remaining major patriot supply route at
27 the time, that which originated in Spanish New Orleans, traversed the Mississippi and
28 Ohio Rivers and ended overland in Philadelphia; and

29 WHEREAS, Don Juan de Miralles, a wealthy Spanish merchant established in
30 Havana, Cuba, was appointed as the Royal Envoy of King Carlos III of Spain to the
31 United States in 1778, and while travelling with his secretary, Don Francisco Rendon, to
32 the revolutionary capital of Philadelphia, he initiated the direct shipment of supplies from

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1 Cuba to Baltimore, Maryland; Charleston, South Carolina; and Philadelphia; aside from
2 making significant stopovers in Williamsburg, Virginia, and in North Carolina; and

3 WHEREAS, After Spain declared war on Britain in June, 1779, the victories of
4 General Don Bernardo de Galvez in the lower Mississippi and at Baton Rouge, Mobile,
5 and Pensacola dismantled British resupply of close to 10,000 Native-American warriors
6 who were a major concern for General Washington because of the raids they had been
7 carrying out in the western areas of the colonies; and

8 WHEREAS, The Maryland Loyalist Regiment, a force comprised of Marylanders
9 from the Eastern Shore, was also defeated and captured during the campaigns of General
10 Galvez; and

11 WHEREAS, The victories of General Galvez resulted, additionally, in the capture
12 of four other British regiments, including: the Pennsylvania Loyalists, the elite British
13 69th Foot, also known as the Royal Americans, the British 16th Foot, and the German
14 Waldeck Regiment; and

15 WHEREAS, Fighting under the command of General Galvez were men from Spain,
16 Cuba, Mexico, Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Costa Rica, as well as from the
17 United States, France, Germany, Italy, and Native-American Nations such as the
18 Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Creek; and

19 WHEREAS, The United States Senate has recognized that the actions of those men
20 and their brave commander were very important for the triumph of American efforts in
21 the Carolinas and Georgia, and also for the final victory against Lord Charles Cornwallis
22 in Yorktown, Virginia; and

23 WHEREAS, The success of the French and American armies at Yorktown would
24 have been difficult to achieve without the donation of 500,000 pounds tournois that were
25 collected in six hours by prominent citizens of Havana, Cuba, for the campaign, and
26 without an additional 1,000,000 pounds that were subsequently donated by King Carlos
27 III of Spain for the same purpose; and

28 WHEREAS, The Yorktown campaign not only consisted of a siege by land but also
29 by sea, undertaken by the French fleet under Admiral de Grasse, whose ships had been
30 readied and supplied with 100,000 pesos from the Spanish colonies of Santo Domingo and
31 Puerto Rico that were handed over by Spanish authorities to the French for said purpose;
32 and

33 WHEREAS, An important element in the French naval victory at the Battle of the
34 Virginia Capes, which sealed the fate of Lord Cornwallis' army at Yorktown, was the
35 numerical superiority enjoyed by Admiral de Grasse's fleet, which resulted from a
36 Spanish naval squadron taking over the protection of the French colonies in the
37 Caribbean to allow the Admiral the benefit of maintaining his fleet intact, and thus obtain
38 the superiority in numbers deemed necessary to defeat the British; and

39 WHEREAS, Hardly any of these Hispanic contributions to American independence
40 are mentioned in the current history textbooks of this nation; now, therefore, be it

41 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the
42 General Assembly acknowledges the pivotal role of Spain and Spanish America in the

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1 triumph of the American Revolution, and also recognizes General Bernardo de Galvez
2 and his men for their significant contributions and achievements in this respect; and be it
3 further

4 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly of Maryland hereby urges historians
5 nationwide to pursue a deeper examination and dissemination of the role played by
6 Hispanics in the accomplishment of American independence as well as in the
7 development and progress of the United States in general, and that study of these
8 contributions be made an integral part of the social studies and history courses taught in
9 the State; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
11 Legislative Reference to the Honorable Parris N. Glendening, Governor of Maryland; the
12 Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; the
13 Honorable Casper R. Taylor, Jr., Speaker of the House of Delegates; and Nancy S.
14 Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore,
15 Maryland 21201.