

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 15

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2000 Regular Session
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By: ~~Delegate Linton~~ Charles County Delegation and Delegates Benson, Bobo, Brinkley, Bronrott, Clagett, DeCarlo, Dobson, Dypski, Glassman, Kittleman, Malone, Mandel, Paige, Parrott, Riley, Shank, Snodgrass, Sophocleus, Swain, and Wood

Introduced and read first time: February 11, 2000
Assigned to: Commerce and Government Matters

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments
House action: Adopted
Read second time: March 7, 2000

RESOLUTION NO. _____

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Task Force to Study Establishing a Matthew Henson Memorial**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing a Task Force to Study Establishing a Matthew
4 Henson Memorial; providing for the membership of the Task Force; providing for
5 the duties of the Task Force; ~~providing for a certain report~~ requiring the Task
6 Force to report to the Governor and the General Assembly by a certain date; and
7 generally relating to a Task Force to Study Establishing a Matthew Henson
8 Memorial.

9 WHEREAS, Matthew Henson, an African American, was born in Charles
10 County ~~in~~ on August 8, 1866; and

11 WHEREAS, At the age of 12, Matthew Henson, ~~was sent to sea where he~~
12 ~~learned~~ joined an expedition to China as a cabin boy under the tutelage of Captain
13 Childs, who taught him mathematics; and navigation, how to read, and most
14 ~~importantly,~~ particularly how to read maps; and

15 WHEREAS, Matthew Henson and ~~Lt.~~ Robert E. Peary traveled seven times to
16 the Arctic on dangerous and difficult expeditions, and as a result ~~Mr.~~ Matthew
17 Henson became a ~~superior dogsled driver and hunter~~ an interpreter of the Inuit
18 language and an expert at on arctic survival, including dogsled driving and hunting;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, On April 6, 1909, ~~Lt. Peary, Matthew Henson, and four Inuit~~
21 ~~Eskimos reached the Arctic with Matthew Henson arriving well ahead of the others~~
22 ~~making him the first person to reach the North Pole~~ then Commander Robert E.

1 Peary, Matthew Henson, and four Inuits reached the North Pole, with Matthew
 2 Henson having arrived first because he was breaking trail ahead of the group; and

3 ~~WHEREAS, This significant achievement of Matthew Henson's, including his~~
 4 ~~trek~~ Although Matthew Henson trekked over 400 miles to stand at the axis top of the
 5 world, went unrecognized for over 20 years due to the color of his skin because of his
 6 race, he was relatively unknown in the United States; and

7 ~~WHEREAS, Eventually Matthew Henson's accomplishment was acknowledged~~
 8 ~~through the receipt of several honorary degrees and the dedication of a glacier, a~~
 9 ~~gymnasium, a middle school, a stamp, a State park, and even an oceanographic ship~~
 10 ~~after him; and~~

11 WHEREAS, Matthew Henson's accomplishment was eventually recognized in
 12 many ways, including: the receipt of a Master of Science Degree from Morgan State
 13 College and Howard University; the naming after him of three arctic locations, a bay,
 14 a cape, and a glacier; and the honoring of Commander Robert E. Peary and Matthew
 15 Henson through a State park, a number of public schools, a U.S. Navy Oceanographic
 16 ship, and a U.S. postage stamp; and

17 WHEREAS, The people of Maryland would like to recognize the magnificent
 18 contributions of Matthew Henson, a native Marylander and a co-discoverer of the
 19 North Pole, by erecting a memorial to honor him; now, therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the
 21 General Assembly and Governor establish a Task Force to Study Establishing a
 22 Matthew Henson Memorial; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the Task Force be composed of:

24 (1) One member who is a representative of the Maryland Historical
 25 Trust, selected by the Director of the Maryland Historical Trust;

26 (2) One member who is a representative of the Maryland Commission on
 27 African American History and Culture, selected by the Chairman of the Commission;

28 (3) One member who is a representative of the Charles County Planning
 29 Commission, selected by the Chairman of the Commission; and

30 (4) Four members who are citizens from Charles County who have
 31 demonstrated an interest in establishing a Matthew Henson Memorial to be selected
 32 by the members of the State Senate and House of Delegates who represent any part of
 33 Charles County; and be it further

34 (5) One member of the Matthew Henson Family, selected by the
 35 members of the State Senate and House of Delegates who represent any part of
 36 Charles County; and be it further

37 RESOLVED, That the Task Force study:

1 (1) An appropriate memorial to commemorate the achievements of
2 Matthew Henson;

3 (2) An appropriate site, within the vicinity of the birthplace of Matthew
4 Henson, for the Matthew Henson Memorial; and

5 (3) The costs associated with establishing a Matthew Henson Memorial;
6 and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations
8 to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to
9 the General Assembly by December 31, 2000; and be it further;

10 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
11 Legislative Services to the Honorable Parris N. Glendening, Governor of Maryland;
12 the Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; and
13 the Honorable Casper R. Taylor, Jr., Speaker of the House of Delegates.