

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 9

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Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2020

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Democracy Day**

3 FOR the purpose of designating December 23 as Democracy Day; and generally relating to
4 Democracy Day.

5 WHEREAS, The Declaration of Independence, signed on July 4, 1776, stated that
6 government is formed by the consent of the people, through which the rights to life, liberty,
7 and the pursuit of happiness can be sought in accordance with the belief that all are created
8 equal; and

9 WHEREAS, The ratification of the Declaration of Independence contributed to the
10 start of the Revolutionary War, which inspired hundreds of thousands of patriots to fight
11 for their liberty, despite great personal sacrifice, under General George Washington; and

12 WHEREAS, While others urged him to become king, on December 23, 1783, George
13 Washington stood before the Continental Congress in the Maryland Statehouse in
14 Annapolis, thanked those assembled for the opportunity to lead the nation to independence
15 and sovereignty, and eschewed power, stepping aside and setting the nation on a path of
16 civil government “of, by and for the people” in what artist John Trumbull described as “one
17 of the highest moral lessons given to the world”; and

18 WHEREAS, King George III, the monarch defeated in America’s Revolutionary War,
19 is claimed to have called Washington the “most distinguished of any man living” and “the
20 greatest character of the age” for Washington’s renouncement of absolute power on
21 December 23, and historian Thomas Fleming called Washington’s renouncement “the most
22 important moment in American History”; and

23 WHEREAS, George Washington’s resignation decidedly ended America’s era of
24 monarchical rule, ushering in the era of American democracy; and



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1 WHEREAS, The world's great act of statesmanship began in Annapolis, the capital
2 city of Maryland, where Washington's resignation speech now lies, providing all
3 Marylanders with a reminder of the sacrifice and devotion necessary to enshrine them with
4 the power of democracy; and

5 WHEREAS, Democracy "of, by and for the people" suggested by philosopher John
6 Locke 200 years earlier, was unique in the world at the time and remains elusive for many
7 nations today; and

8 WHEREAS, Democracy continues to allow Americans to seek representation in their
9 government and pursue the rights and ideas declared many years ago, and must not be
10 forgotten; and

11 WHEREAS, Trust in the people and the power of their vote led the United States to
12 become a world leader; now, therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the General
14 Assembly of Maryland designates December 23 as "Democracy Day" to encourage
15 contemplation of the importance of service to American freedom and inspire active
16 participation in democracy; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
18 Legislative Services to the Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor of Maryland; the
19 Honorable William C. Ferguson, IV, President of the Senate of Maryland; and the
20 Honorable Adrienne A. Jones, Speaker of the House of Delegates.