

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 846

Commemorating the life and legacy of Carter G. Woodson.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 21, 2025

WHEREAS, Carter G. Woodson, born on December 19, 1875, in New Canton was a visionary scholar and historian whose passion for preserving and celebrating Black history transformed how the nation celebrates the contributions of Black Americans; and

WHEREAS, the son of formerly enslaved parents, Carter Woodson's journey was one of perseverance and relentless pursuit of knowledge, working in the coal mines of West Virginia while educating himself before formally entering school in his late teens; and

WHEREAS, despite facing immense barriers, Carter Woodson achieved extraordinary academic success, earning a bachelor's degree from Berea College, a master's degree from the University of Chicago, and ultimately a doctorate in history from Harvard University—becoming only the second Black American to do so, following W.E.B. Du Bois; and

WHEREAS deeply aware of the historical exclusion of Black achievements from mainstream narratives, Carter Woodson dedicated his life to correcting this injustice, founding the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915 and launching *The Journal of Negro History* to document and elevate the stories that had long been ignored; and

WHEREAS, Carter Woodson's efforts culminated in the creation of Negro History Week in 1926, strategically placed in February to honor both President Abraham Lincoln and abolitionist Frederick Douglass—a celebration that grew into what is now recognized as Black History Month, an annual tribute to the resilience, brilliance, and contributions of Black Americans; and

WHEREAS, through groundbreaking works such as *A Century of Negro Migration* (1918), *The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861* (1919), *The History of the Negro Church* (1921), and *The Negro in Our History* (1922), Carter Woodson not only rewrote history—he made sure future generations would know their worth, their power, and their rightful place in the American story; and

WHEREAS, Carter Woodson's legacy lives on in classrooms, institutions, and movements across the country, inspiring countless individuals to continue the vital work of truth-telling, education, and empowerment; and

WHEREAS, during Black History Month, Virginians across the Commonwealth will reflect on the profound impact of Carter G. Woodson and reaffirm their commitment to ensuring that Black history is honored not just in February, but every single day of the year; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the life and legacy of Carter G. Woodson, whose vision gave rise to Black History Month and whose scholarship forever changed how the nation understands and celebrates contributions of Black Americans, hereby be commemorated on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of his birth; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Carter G. Woodson as an expression of the House of Delegates' deep appreciation for his unwavering dedication to history, education, and justice.

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