

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 23

Reps. Wortz, BeGole, Fox, Jenkins-Arno, Martin, Outman, Kuhn, DeBoer, Tisdell, Roth, Steele, Harris, Frisbie, Neyer, Bohnak, Hoadley, Beson, Wozniak, DeSana, Alexander, O'Neal, Rigas, Pavlov and VanderWall offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to declare February 14, 2025, as Frederick
2 Douglass Day in the state of Michigan.

3 Whereas, Frederick Douglass was born into slavery in February
4 1818 in the state of Maryland. He never knew the exact date of his
5 own birth but adopted Valentine's Day as his birthday after his
6 mother Harriet Bailey called him her "Little Valentine"; and

7 Whereas, Mr. Douglass escaped from bondage at the age of 20,
8 whereupon he began a life dedicated to the abolition of slavery in
9 the United States and the recognition of Black Americans as free
10 and equal citizens; and

11 Whereas, Frederick Douglass worked throughout his childhood to

1 learn to read and write, even against the wishes of the family
2 which claimed to own him, and shortly after his escape from slavery
3 became a famed and persuasive orator, detailing to Northern
4 audiences the horrors of life in the South for slaves and arguing
5 for the fundamental equality of all Americans; and

6 Whereas, Mr. Douglass made several visits to Michigan, where
7 he met with other proponents of abolition across the state,
8 including in Detroit, Hillsdale, and Ypsilanti, and gave speeches
9 on civil rights; and

10 Whereas, In freedom, Frederick Douglass married Anna Murray
11 and raised five children. Following Anna's death, he married Helen
12 Pitts; and

13 Whereas, During the Civil War, Frederick Douglass recruited
14 the first Black military unit in United States history, the 54th
15 Massachusetts Infantry, which included his sons Charles and Lewis;
16 and

17 Whereas, Mr. Douglass knew and advised many prominent American
18 statesmen and citizens of his day, including Ida B. Wells, Susan B.
19 Anthony, Charles Remond, William Lloyd Garrison, and John Marshall
20 Harlan, as well as Abraham Lincoln and every President of the
21 United States who served after Lincoln until Douglass' death in
22 1888; and

23 Whereas, Mr. Douglass served the United States as U.S. Marshal
24 for the District of Columbia, Recorder of Deeds for the District of
25 Columbia, and as Minister to Haiti; and

26 Whereas, To this day, Frederick Douglass' autobiographies and
27 speeches serve as powerful testimonies to the motto of Douglass'
28 newspaper the North Star, which asserts "Right is of no sex—Truth
29 is of no Color—God is the Father of us all, and we are all

1 Brethren"; and

2 Whereas, February 14, 2025, will be recognized as the 207th
3 anniversary of Frederick Douglass' birth; now, therefore, be it

4 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of
5 this legislative body declare February 14, 2025, as Frederick
6 Douglass Day in the state of Michigan.