

Proclamation

Board of Commissioners for Washington County

A PROCLAMATION IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2020

WHEREAS, the Washington County Board of Commissioners takes pride in recognizing February 2020 as Black History Month, celebrating the many notable contributions that people of African descent have made to our country; and

WHEREAS, we commend the great achievements and successes of Black Americans in all fields of endeavor, including education, the arts, sciences, politics, business, the armed forces, sports, entertainment and many others; and

WHEREAS, this year's theme, "African Americans and the Vote," recognizes the struggle for voting rights for Black Americans throughout our nation's history, and the ongoing struggle which continues to this day; and

WHEREAS, 2020 marks the 150th anniversary of the Fifteenth Amendment which established voting rights of Black men following the Civil War; and 2020 also marks the centennial of the Nineteenth Amendment, finally granting all women the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, even with the passage of these amendments, it wasn't until the rise of the Civil Rights Movement and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that the right to vote was ensured for a majority of southern Blacks; and

WHEREAS, the struggle continues following the Supreme Court decision of "Shelby v. Holder" in 2013 which eliminated a key provision of the Voting Rights Act, weakening our federal protections against discriminatory voting practices such as "gerrymandering" and other rules which disproportionately impact Black and other minority voters; and

WHEREAS, today, we affirm the right of every American to participate in a representative government in which their right to vote is foundational to our values. We also affirm that we have important work to do as a nation, to remove barriers to voting, improve voter access and enforce the rights of all citizens to make their voices heard and their votes to count.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners does hereby proclaim February 1st – February 29th, 2020, as Black History Month, and calls on the people of Washington County to observe this month with appropriate programs, activities and reflections.

Kathryn Harrington, Washington County Board Chair

Recording Secretary

Minute Order