

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 6028

A RESOLUTION commemorating the spirit and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on the 40th anniversary of his assassination.

WHEREAS, King was assassinated on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee, while preparing for a march on behalf of striking sanitation workers seeking economic equality and social justice. The 39 year-old leader was gunned down at the Lorraine Motel just minutes before he was to leave for dinner at a colleague's home; and

WHEREAS, One of the most visible advocates of nonviolence and direct action as methods of social change, Martin Luther King, Jr. was born in Atlanta on January 15, 1929; and

WHEREAS, After attending Morehouse College in Atlanta, King went on to study at Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania and Boston University, where he deepened his understanding of theological scholarship and explored Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent strategy for social change; and

WHEREAS, On December 5, 1955, after civil rights activist Rosa Parks refused to comply with Montgomery's segregation policy on buses, black residents launched a bus boycott and elected King president of the newly-formed Montgomery Improvement Association. The boycott continued throughout 1956 and King gained national prominence for his role in the campaign. In December 1956 the United States Supreme Court declared Alabama's segregation laws unconstitutional and Montgomery buses were desegregated; and

WHEREAS, Seeking to build upon the success in Montgomery, King and other southern black ministers founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957. In the spring of 1963, King and SCLC lead mass demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama, where local white police officials were known for their violent opposition to integration. Clashes between unarmed black demonstrators and police armed with dogs and fire hoses generated newspaper headlines throughout the world. President Kennedy responded to the Birmingham protests by submitting broad civil rights legislation to Congress, which led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; and

WHEREAS, Subsequent mass demonstrations culminated in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on August 28, 1963, in which more than 250,000 protesters gathered in Washington, D. C. It was on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial that King delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech; and

WHEREAS, King's renown continued to grow as he became Time magazine's Man of the Year in 1963 and the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964; and

WHEREAS, In late 1967, King initiated a Poor People's Campaign designed to confront economic problems that had not been addressed by earlier civil rights reforms. The following year, while supporting striking sanitation workers in Memphis, he delivered his final address "I've Been to the Mountaintop." The next day, April 4, 1968, King was assassinated; and

WHEREAS, To this day, King remains an exemplary symbol of the African American civil rights struggle, revered by many for his martyrdom on behalf of nonviolence: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Kansas: That we commemorate the spirit and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on the 40th anniversary of his assassination.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the HOUSE, and was adopted by that body

Speaker of the House.

Chief Clerk of the House.