

State of Maine



**WHEREAS**, Black History Month, previously known as Negro History Week, was founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson and first celebrated on February 1, 1926; and

**WHEREAS**, since 1976, it has become a nationally recognized month-long celebration held to acknowledge and pay tribute to the contributions made by African Americans to the history of our country that for years were omitted by society and history books; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans have helped shape our nation's identity and contributed greatly to the success of our country through invaluable contributions in all professions and fields including education, law, government, sports, the arts and sciences, and the United States Armed Forces; and

**WHEREAS**, the African American community has endured decades of struggle and persevered through hate and bigotry to be recognized as equal among our fellow citizens, and yet black men and women still face barriers to equality and justice; and

**WHEREAS**, Maine was one of the last stops on the Underground Railroad, leading to the 1828 construction of the Abyssinian Meeting House, the first Black church in Maine, and the third oldest African-American meeting house in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, while Maine is known for its abolitionist history, slavery and the slave trade are an important part of our history, one that we must acknowledge; and

**WHEREAS**, 2020 marked the 150th anniversary of the 15th Amendment which declared that the right to vote "shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude," a right that I am committed to defending for all people at all times as enshrined in our state's constitution; and

**WHEREAS**, during the month of February our nation takes pause to reflect on the injustices and struggles overcome by black men and women throughout our nation's history, and to pay tribute to the battles they have fought in the name of equality;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it resolved that I, Janet T. Mills, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby proclaim February 2022 as

**Black History Month**

in Maine, and I urge all Maine citizens to recognize and honor the legacy, contributions, and achievements of African Americans throughout our shared history.



In testimony whereof, I have caused the Great Seal of the State to be hereunto affixed GIVEN under my hand at Augusta this twenty-sixth day of January Two Thousand Twenty-Two

Janet T. Mills  
Governor

Shenna Bellows  
Secretary of State