

Resolution

No. 25-71

CELEBRATING FEBRUARY 2025 AS BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN THE COUNTY OF MAUI

WHEREAS, on February 10, 1976, President Gerald R. Ford issued a message on the observance of Black History Month; and

WHEREAS, every United States president has since designated the month of February as Black History Month; and

WHEREAS, Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and their contributions in United States history; and

WHEREAS, many African Americans guided by a sense of justice and a commitment to a better world have worked for social progress and against racism to achieve success and to make significant contributions to the economic, educational, political, artistic, athletic, literary, scientific, and technological advancement of the United States; and

WHEREAS, on November 4, 2008, the people of the United States elected Barack Obama to be the first African-American President of the United States; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure, President Obama brought global recognition and admiration for cultural diversity to his birthplace, the State of Hawai'i; and

WHEREAS, Black people have made countless, invaluable contributions to many phases of Hawai'i's development; and

WHEREAS, the first Black people arrived in the Hawaiian Islands in the early 1800s as deckhands on merchant and whaling ships, coming from Africa, the Caribbean, and the United States, and many became successful musicians, businesspersons, and respected government officials; and

WHEREAS, in 1897, Black citizens of the Kingdom of Hawai'i joined Kānaka Maoli in their fight for liberation by signing the Kū'ē Petition,

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protesting the annexation of the Kingdom of Hawai'i by the United States;
and

WHEREAS, a decade before the United States Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation, Article 12 of the Kingdom of Hawai'i Constitution of 1852 said:

Slavery shall, under no circumstances whatever, be tolerated in the Hawaiian Islands: whenever a slave shall enter Hawaiian territory he shall be free; no person who imports a slave, or slaves, into the King's dominions shall ever enjoy any civil or political rights in this realm; but involuntary servitude for the punishment of crime is allowable according to law; and

WHEREAS, among the many Black people who have made unprecedented achievements to Hawai'i's community throughout its history include:

- Anthony D. Allen, advisor and steward to King Kamehameha I;
- William F. Crockett, member of the Board of Registration of Wailuku, Deputy County Attorney of the County of Maui, a judge of Wailuku, and member of the Territorial House of Representatives;
- Oliver and George Washington Hyatt, the first two bandmasters of the Royal Hawaiian Band under King Kamehameha III;
- Betsey Stockton, founder of the first mission school in Lahaina open to all—now the site of Lahainaluna High School;
- Alice A. Ball, the first woman to earn a master's degree at the University of Hawai'i, the first woman instructor at UH's Department of Chemistry, and the discoverer of the first treatment for leprosy, known as the "Ball Method";
- Thomas McCants Stewart, an attorney, teacher, clergy, and civil rights leader, who helped draft the Organic Act to protect

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Hawaiian interests and was later instrumental in drafting Honolulu's County Charter; and

- Dr. Donnis Thompson, the University of Hawai'i's first women's athletic director, who started the Rainbow Wahine sports program, and a State school superintendent; and

WHEREAS, on March 19, 1965, the Maui County Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution 65-31, denouncing the violence used by Alabama governmental authorities against civil rights demonstrators and urged Hawai'i's congressional delegation to vote for the swift passage of new voting rights legislation; and

WHEREAS, on August 18, 2020, the Council adopted Resolution 20-115 to recognize June 19th as Juneteenth in Maui County; and

WHEREAS, the rich culture and proud heritage of Black people have been and continue to be positive influences upon life in Hawai'i; and

WHEREAS, our Black community is the current manifestation of their ancestors, continuing to contribute to the betterment of Hawai'i as leaders, innovators, entrepreneurs, educators, athletes, artists, cultural practitioners, activists, environmentalists, healthcare professionals, scientists, attorneys, and policymakers; and

WHEREAS, recognition of the contributions of Black people and their culture is important to the promotion and awareness of Hawai'i's diverse and multicultural society; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Maui:

1. That it celebrates February 2025 as Black History Month in the County of Maui;
2. That it recognizes the importance of Black History Month as an opportunity to reflect on the complex history of the United States, while remaining hopeful and confident about the path ahead;
3. That it is proud to acknowledge all of the African Americans who have played an important role in making our County,

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State, and Nation a better place to live and are grateful for their contributions and leadership; and

4. That certified copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Honorable Josh Green, M.D., Governor, State of Hawai'i; Marcus L. Kawatachi, Executive Director, Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission; Salmah Y. Rizvi, Executive Director, American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i; Alphonso Braggs, President, Honolulu-Hawai'i National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Camille A. Nelson, Dean, Professor of Law, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, William S. Richardson School of Law; and the Honorable Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor, County of Maui.

INTRODUCED BY:



SHANE M. SINENCI