

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas even though African-Americans were excluded from playing in the Major Leagues of their time with their white counterparts, the desire of many African-Americans to play baseball could not be repressed;

Whereas Major League Baseball did not fully integrate its leagues until July 1959;

Whereas African-Americans began organizing their own professional baseball teams in 1885;

Whereas the skills and abilities of Negro League players eventually made Major League Baseball realize the need to integrate the sport;

Whereas 7 separate baseball leagues, known collectively as the “Negro Baseball Leagues”, were organized by African-Americans between 1920 and 1960;

Whereas the Negro Baseball Leagues included exceptionally talented players who played the game at its highest level;

Whereas on May 20, 1920, the Negro National League, the first successful Negro League, played its first game;

Whereas Andrew “Rube” Foster founded the Negro National League on February 13, 1920, at the Paseo YMCA in Kansas City, Missouri, and also managed and played for the Chicago American Giants, and was later inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas Leroy “Satchel” Paige, who began his long career in the Negro Leagues and did not make his Major League debut until the age of 42, is considered one of the greatest pitchers the game has ever seen, and during his long career thrilled millions of baseball fans with his skill and legendary showboating, helping the Cleveland Indians win the pennant in his first big league victory beginning with his first game on July 15, 1948, and was later inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas Josh Gibson, who was the greatest slugger of the Negro Leagues, tragically died months before the integration of baseball, and was later inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas Jackie Robinson, whose career began with the Negro League Kansas City Monarchs, became the first African-American to play in the Major Leagues in April 1947, was named Major League Baseball Rookie of the Year in 1947, subsequently led the Brooklyn Dodgers to 6 National League pennants and a World Series championship, and was later inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas Larry Doby, whose career began with the Negro League Newark Eagles, became the first African-American to play in the American League in July 1947, was an All-Star 9 times in Negro League and Major League Baseball, and was later inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas John Jordan “Buck” O’Neil was a player and manager of the Negro League Kansas City Monarchs, became the first African-American coach in the Major Leagues with the Chicago Cubs in 1962, served on the Veterans Committee of the National Baseball Hall of Fame,

chaired the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum Board of Directors, and worked tirelessly to promote the history of the Negro Leagues;

Whereas James “Cool Papa” Bell played, coached, and managed in the Negro Leagues from 1922 to 1950, discovered, trained, and assisted numerous Negro League players into the Major Leagues, and was later inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas Minnie Minoso, the “Cuban Comet,” played on the New York Cubans when they won the Negro League World Series, broke the color barrier on the Chicago White Sox when he joined the team in 1951, and was the first black Latino to play in the Major Leagues;

Whereas the talents of such players as Josh Gibson, James “Cool Papa” Bell, and Oscar Charleston earned them recognition in the Baseball Hall of Fame as well as the Sporting News List of Baseball Greatest Players;

Whereas Autozone Park in Memphis, Tennessee, hosted the inaugural Civil Rights Game between the defending World Champion St. Louis Cardinals and the Cleveland Indians in commemoration of the civil rights movement, on March 31, 2007; and

Whereas by achieving success on the baseball field, African-American baseball players helped break down color barriers and integrate African-Americans into all aspects of society in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3 (1) recognizes the teams and players of the
4 Negro Baseball Leagues for their achievements,

1 dedication, sacrifices, and contributions to both
2 baseball and our Nation; and

3 (2) encourages the observation of Negro
4 Leaguers Recognition Day on May 20 of each year.

Passed the Senate May 10, 2007.

Attest:

Secretary.

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. CON. RES. 29

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Encouraging the recognition of the Negro Baseball
Leagues and their players on May 20th of each
year.