

First Regular Session  
Seventy-fourth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. R23-0706.01 Andrew Webster x2044

**HJR23-1006**

---

**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**English and Epps**, Bacon, Herod, Jodeh, Joseph, Ricks

**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**Coleman and Exum**, Buckner, Fields

---

**House Committees**

**Senate Committees**

---

**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 23-1006**

101     **CONCERNING THE COMMEMORATION OF THE BIRTHDAY OF THE**  
102     **REVEREND DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

---

1           WHEREAS, The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was born  
2           in Atlanta, Georgia, on January 15, 1929, graduated from Morehouse  
3           College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1948, graduated from Crozer  
4           Theological Seminary in 1951, and received a Ph.D. from Boston  
5           University in 1955; and

6           WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. King's faith, resiliency, and commitment to  
7           justice became known worldwide through his speeches, writings, and  
8           actions; and

9           WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. King declared that the moral responsibility  
10          to aid the oppressed did not stop at the edge of his street, town, or state

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.  
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

1 when he wrote, "I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about  
2 what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice  
3 everywhere."; and

4 WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. King, like thousands of other African  
5 Americans, withstood attacks on his home and family, among numerous  
6 other threats and setbacks, standing firm in his conviction that although  
7 the arc of the moral universe is long, it bends towards justice; and

8 WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. King embodied civil disobedience. He,  
9 along with others in the civil rights movement, created constructive  
10 tension by being intentionally nonviolent but direct as well as urgent but  
11 strategic in their actions. This tension compelled meaningful negotiation  
12 with the white power structure of our country without which true civil  
13 rights could never be achieved. The urgency required reflection of the  
14 assumptions that progress toward equal rights was inevitable and so  
15 assertive activism was unnecessary; confronting the myth that time will  
16 inevitably cure all ills. In a letter from Birmingham jail, Rev. Dr. King  
17 wrote that "those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation"  
18 saying "wait" and asking African Americans to wait for courts or for  
19 minds to change on their own was a continued miscarriage of justice. He  
20 wrote, "We know through painful experience that freedom is never  
21 voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the  
22 oppressed."; and

23 WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. King led the Montgomery bus boycott, a  
24 13-month protest beginning in 1955, against the segregated city bus lines;  
25 and

26 WHEREAS, The Montgomery bus boycott led to the integration  
27 of the Montgomery city bus system and is widely credited as the  
28 beginning of the civil rights movement in America; and

29 WHEREAS, In 1957, Rev. Dr. King was elected president of the  
30 Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization formed to  
31 provide leadership for the burgeoning civil rights movement; and

32 WHEREAS, Between 1957 and 1968, Rev. Dr. King spoke more  
33 than 2,500 times, wrote 5 books as well as numerous articles, led protests,  
34 helped register African American voters, was arrested more than 20  
35 times, was awarded 5 honorary degrees, was named Man of the Year by  
36 Time magazine, and became the symbolic leader of the African American

1       community as well as a world figure; and

2           WHEREAS, On August 28, 1963, Rev. Dr. King directed the  
3       March on Washington, at which more than 200,000 Americans gathered  
4       in the name of equality and civil rights and which culminated in Rev. Dr.  
5       King's historic "I Have a Dream" speech; and

6           WHEREAS, The leadership of Rev. Dr. King was instrumental in  
7       bringing about landmark legislation, such as the "Civil Rights Act of  
8       1964", which prohibited segregation in public accommodations and  
9       facilities and banned discrimination based on race, color, or national  
10      origin, and the "Voting Rights Act of 1965", which eliminated remaining  
11      legal barriers to voting for disenfranchised African American voters; and

12          WHEREAS, In 1964, Rev. Dr. King was awarded the Nobel Peace  
13       Prize for his tireless and selfless work in the pursuit of justice for African  
14       Americans and other oppressed people in America; and

15          WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. King's 13 years of nonviolent leadership  
16       ended abruptly and tragically when, on April 4, 1968, he was assassinated  
17       while standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis,  
18       Tennessee; and

19          WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. King's life and work continue to echo in our  
20       lives as we strive to reach the lofty goal he set when he said, "Let us all  
21       hope that the dark clouds of racial prejudice will soon pass away and the  
22       deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from our fear-drenched  
23       communities, and in some not too distant tomorrow the radiant stars of  
24       love and brotherhood will shine over our great nation with all their  
25       scintillating beauty."; and

26          WHEREAS, The celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in  
27       Colorado was championed for 10 years by Representative Wellington and  
28       Wilma Webb in the hope that the acknowledgment of the holiday would  
29       demonstrate Colorado's commitment to confronting and ending racial  
30       injustices. In 1974, Representative Wellington Webb first introduced a  
31       resolution to acknowledge the holiday, and in 1975, introduced a bill to  
32       do the same. Although these efforts were initially unsuccessful, the work  
33       nevertheless continued. In 1985, Representative Wilma Webb  
34       championed the cause as the primary bill sponsor. On April 4th of that  
35       same year, Colorado Governor Dick Lamm signed the bill into law; and

1            WHEREAS, Colorado's enactment of the holiday and the annual  
2 Marade -- a merging of the words "march" and "parade" -- predated the  
3 federal holiday designation, and the first celebration in Colorado was on  
4 January 20, 1986; and

5            WHEREAS, Rev. Dr. King's birthday is a federal holiday in the  
6 United States and a state holiday in the state of Colorado, which is  
7 celebrated each year on the third Monday in January; and

8            WHEREAS, On Monday, January 16, 2023, we celebrate the 36th  
9 anniversary of Rev. Dr. King's holiday; now, therefore,

10            *Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the  
11 Seventy-fourth General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the Senate  
12 concurring herein:*

13            That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly, hereby  
14 encourage appropriate observances, ceremonies, and activities to  
15 commemorate the federal and state legal holiday honoring the Rev. Dr.  
16 Martin Luther King, Jr., throughout all cities, towns, counties, school  
17 districts, and local governments within Colorado.

18            *Be It Further Resolved*, That in light of the rising tide of violence  
19 in our state and nation, the legislature commends the Colorado state board  
20 of education for their leadership in adding the teaching of Dr. King's  
21 legacy and the nonviolent principles to Colorado's seventh grade social  
22 studies standards. The legislature also calls upon Colorado public schools  
23 to honor the legacy of Dr. King by embracing these new educational  
24 standards and actively teaching Dr. King's cause for leadership and  
25 nonviolent principles as a response to the forces of hatred, racism, and  
26 violence in our society. In this way, Colorado and Colorado educators can  
27 lead the way in showing a new generation a path to a better, more  
28 prosperous, and more peaceful future for all.

29            *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent  
30 to President Joe Biden, Honorable Governor Jared Polis, the Honorable  
31 Wilma and Wellington Webb, the Congressional Black Caucus, the  
32 National Black Caucus of State Legislators, and the members of  
33 Colorado's congressional delegation: Senators Michael Bennet and John  
34 Hickenlooper and Representatives Diana DeGette, Joe Neguse, Lauren  
35 Boebert, Ken Buck, Doug Lamborn, Jason Crow, Brittany Pettersen, and  
36 Yadira Caraveo.