

HR 9067

2008

1 House Resolution

2 A resolution recognizing March 25, 2008, as "African
3 Methodist Episcopal Church Day" at the Capitol.

4
5 WHEREAS, the African Methodist Episcopal Church grew out of
6 the Free African Society, established by Richard Allen, Absalom
7 Jones, and others in 1787 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and

8 WHEREAS, facing discrimination at the hands of American
9 Methodists at the St. George Methodist Episcopal Church, members
10 of the Free African Society transformed their mutual aid society
11 into a church congregation, and

12 WHEREAS, in 1794 the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal
13 Church was dedicated with Richard Allen as pastor, and

14 WHEREAS, to establish the Bethel African Methodist
15 Episcopal Church's independence from interfering white
16 Methodists, Richard Allen successfully sued in the Pennsylvania
17 courts in 1807 and 1815 for the right of his congregation to
18 exist as an independent institution, and

19 WHEREAS, with the geographical spread of the African
20 Methodist Episcopal Church prior to the Civil War mainly
21 restricted to the Northeast and Midwest, the most significant
22 era of denominational development occurred during the Civil War
23 and Reconstruction, when Union army officials would allow
24 African Methodist Episcopal Church clergy to move into the
25 states of the collapsing Confederacy to pull newly freed slaves
26 into their denomination, and

27 WHEREAS, by 1880, African Methodist Episcopal Church
28 membership reached 400,000 members, and

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29 WHEREAS, Bishop Henry M. Turner pushed African Methodism
30 across the Atlantic Ocean into Liberia and Sierra Leone in 1891
31 and into South Africa in 1896, and

32 WHEREAS, while the African Methodist Episcopal Church is
33 doctrinally Methodist, clergy, scholars, and lay persons have
34 written many important works that demonstrate the distinctive
35 theology and praxis which have defined this Wesleyan body, and

36 WHEREAS, by the 1990s, the African Methodist Episcopal
37 Church included over 2,000,000 members, 8,000 ministers, and
38 7,000 congregations, with 20 bishops and 12 general officers
39 comprising the leadership of the denomination in more than 30
40 nations in North and South America, Africa, and Europe, and

41 WHEREAS, in Florida and the Bahamas, the African Methodist
42 Episcopal Church boasts over 105,000 members in the Florida,
43 East, Central, West Coast, South, and Bahamas Conferences, who
44 are currently led by Bishop McKinley Young, NOW, THEREFORE,

45
46 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
47 Florida:

48
49 That the Florida House of Representatives recognizes March
50 25, 2008, as "African Methodist Episcopal Church Day" at the
51 Capitol.