

HR 8031

2020

## 1 House Resolution

2 A resolution celebrating the 120th anniversary of  
3 "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" by James Weldon Johnson  
4 and John Rosamond Johnson.  
5

6 WHEREAS, in 1899, Jacksonville native James Weldon Johnson  
7 wrote the poem "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" and

8 WHEREAS, his brother, John Rosamond Johnson, set the poem  
9 to music for a celebration of President Abraham Lincoln's  
10 birthday, and

11 WHEREAS, "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" was first performed in  
12 public by a choir of 500 schoolchildren at the segregated  
13 Stanton School in Jacksonville on February 12, 1900, where James  
14 Weldon Johnson was the principal, and

15 WHEREAS, in the following decades, "Lift Ev'ry Voice and  
16 Sing" spread across the South and the country, and

17 WHEREAS, in 1919, the hymn was adopted by the National  
18 Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) as its  
19 official song, and

20 WHEREAS, "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" has been sung in  
21 schools, graduation ceremonies, military assemblies, sporting  
22 events, and other civic meetings, often alongside the "Star  
23 Spangled Banner," and

HR 8031

2020

24 WHEREAS, the hymn became known as the Black National Anthem  
25 and is one of the most cherished songs of the African-American  
26 civil rights movement, and

27 WHEREAS, "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing," a truly American  
28 hymn, is a celebration of liberty, a remembrance of struggle,  
29 and a hopeful prayer for a better future that has special  
30 meaning for African-Americans and their history but resonates  
31 with all Americans, and

32 WHEREAS, February 12, 2020, marks the 120th anniversary of  
33 "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing," NOW, THEREFORE,

34

35 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of  
36 Florida:

37

38 That the House of Representatives commemorates the 120th  
39 anniversary of "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" and recognizes the  
40 contribution this song has made to the City of Jacksonville, the  
41 State of Florida, and our nation.