

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 386

Honoring the Pre-Negro Leagues and Negro Leagues baseball players and executives elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame Class of 2006.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 1, 2006

Mr. TALENT (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FRIST, and Mr. SUNUNU)
submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Honoring the Pre-Negro Leagues and Negro Leagues baseball players and executives elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame Class of 2006.

Whereas African Americans began to play baseball in the late 1800s on military teams, college teams, and company teams, and eventually found their way onto professional teams with White players;

Whereas the racism and “Jim Crow” laws that forced African American players from their integrated teams by 1900 compelled those dedicated players to form their own “barnstorming” teams that traveled throughout the United States and offered to play any team willing to challenge them;

Whereas, in 1920, the Negro National League was created under the guidance of Andrew “Rube” Foster, a former

player, manager, and owner of the Chicago American Giants, at a meeting held at the Paseo YMCA in Kansas City, Missouri;

Whereas soon after the Negro National League was formed, rival leagues were assembled in eastern and southern States, bringing the thrills and innovative play of African American ballplayers to major urban centers and rural countrysides throughout the United States, Canada, and Latin America;

Whereas, from the 1920s to the 1960s, over 30 communities located throughout the United States were home to teams in 1 of the 6 Negro Leagues;

Whereas the Negro Leagues maintained a high level of professional skill and became centerpieces for economic development in their communities;

Whereas, in 1945, the Brooklyn Dodgers of Major League Baseball recruited Jackie Robinson from the Kansas City Monarchs, making Robinson the first African American in the modern era to play on a Major League Baseball roster;

Whereas the integration of Major League Baseball, which soon followed the signing of Jackie Robinson, prompted the decline of the Negro Leagues because the Major Leagues began to recruit and sign the best African American ballplayers;

Whereas it has been recognized by numerous baseball authorities that many of the greatest players ever to play the game of baseball played in the Negro Leagues, rather than Major League Baseball;

Whereas, on February 27, 2006, the National Baseball Hall of Fame announced that Ray Brown, Willard Brown,

Andy Cooper, Frank Grant, Pete Hill, Biz Mackey, Effa Manley, Joe Mendez, Alex Pompey, Cum Posey, Louis Santop, Mule Suttles, Ben Taylor, Cristobal Torriente, Sol White, J.L. Wilkinson, and Jud Wilson had been elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame Class of 2006;

Whereas less than 1 percent of all professional baseball players have been honored with induction into the National Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas we congratulate Ray Brown, an ace starter for the Homestead Grays who—

- (1) ranks among the top Negro Leagues pitchers in total wins and winning percentage; and
- (2) pitched a perfect game in 1945 as well as a one-hitter in the 1944 Negro World Series;

Whereas we congratulate Willard Brown, an outfielder with the Kansas City Monarchs who—

- (1) led the Negro American League in home runs and batting average during numerous seasons; and
- (2) was considered by many to be the Negro American League version of Josh Gibson;

Whereas we congratulate Andy Cooper, a pitcher with the Detroit Stars and Kansas City Monarchs who—

- (1) had a knack for changing the speed of his pitches;
- (2) was the all-time leader in every Detroit Stars pitching category;
- (3) was among the top 10 leaders in career wins, strikeouts, shutouts, and winning percentage in Negro Leagues history; and
- (4) later in his career became the manager of the Kansas City Monarchs and led them to 3 pennants;

Whereas we congratulate Frank Grant, a second baseman with tremendous range and a strong arm who—

(1) hit over .300 in 4 seasons with White minor league teams until the color lines forced him out of the league in 1886;

(2) played for top-rated African American teams until 1903; and

(3) who displayed a unique blend of speed and power in the International League that allowed him to turn 1 out of every 4 base hits into extra bases;

Whereas we congratulate Pete Hill, a premier outfielder who—

(1) played brilliantly for the Cuban X-Giants, Philadelphia Giants, Chicago Leland Giants, and the Chicago American Giants before the formation of the Negro Leagues;

(2) during his 1911 season as an American Giant, hit safely in 115 out of 116 games; and

(3) was rated the fourth best outfielder in the renowned 1952 Pittsburgh Courier player-voted poll of the best players of the Negro Leagues;

Whereas we congratulate Biz Mackey, a strong-armed catcher who—

(1) ended his career with a lifetime batting average well over .300;

(2) ranked among the top Negro Leaguers in lifetime total bases, RBIs, and slugging percentage; and

(3) later managed the Baltimore Elite Giants and the Newark Eagles who, under his skill and leadership, won the Negro World Series in 1946;

Whereas we congratulate Effa Manley, the co-owner of the Newark Eagles, who—

(1) has become the first woman elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame; and

(2) in addition to her efforts in baseball, played an active role in the Civil Rights Movement by promoting such causes as Anti-Lynching Day at Ruppert Stadium, which is the home of the Eagles;

Whereas we congratulate Jose Mendez, a right-handed pitcher who—

(1) earned a winning percentage of just under .700 during his memorable career as a member of the Cuban Stars, All Nations, and Kansas City Monarchs; and

(2) managed the Kansas City Monarchs to successive pennants from 1923–1925, during which time he compiled a 20–4 pitching record with 7 saves;

Whereas we congratulate Alex Pompey, a successful team owner who—

(1) owned the Cuban Stars of the Eastern Colored League and then the New York Cubans of the Negro National League; and

(2) signed the first Puerto Rican, Dominican, Venezuelan, and Panamanian players of the circuit;

Whereas we congratulate “Cum” Posey, owner of the Homestead Grays, who—

(1) won the Negro National League pennant 8 times between 1937 and 1945; and

(2) assembled teams that were home to 11 of the 18 Negro Leaguers currently in the Hall of Fame;

Whereas we congratulate Louis Santop, a power-hitting catcher who—

(1) played for several of the greatest African American teams of the pre-Negro Leagues era, including the

Philadelphia Giants, New York Lincoln Giants, and the Brooklyn Giants;

(2) hit over .320 while slugging tape-measure home-runs during his tremendous career in the Negro Leagues; and

(3) was rated by Rollo Wilson as the first string catcher on his all-time Black baseball team;

Whereas we congratulate Mule Suttles, a hard-hitting first baseman and outfielder who—

(1) played spectacularly for the St. Louis Stars, Chicago American Giants, Birmingham Black Barons, Newark Eagles, and other Negro League teams; and

(2) was 1 of the most powerful home run hitters in the Negro Leagues, ranking third all-time among Negro Leaguers in home runs and RBIs;

Whereas we congratulate Ben Taylor, a pitcher who—

(1) transitioned into a top-ranked first baseman and clean-up hitter for the Indianapolis ABC's at the start of his career;

(2) served as an extremely successful player-manager from 1923–1929; and

(3) exclusively managed the Washington Potomacs, the Baltimore Black Sox, and the Atlantic City Bacharach Giants until 1940;

Whereas we congratulate Cristobal Torriente, a 5-tool outfielder who—

(1) played most of his games for the Cuban Stars and Chicago American Giants;

(2) earned an incredible lifetime batting average of over .330; and

(3) is 1 of the all-time offensive leaders in Negro Leagues history, ranking in the top 20 all-time in home runs, RBIs, and total bases;

Whereas we congratulate Sol White, a tremendously gifted baseball player who—

(1) played all infield positions during his 25-year baseball career;

(2) was a member of the best African American independent teams of the pre-Negro Leagues era, including the Philadelphia Giants, which he helped found in 1902 as playing manager;

(3) hit .359 in the White minor leagues during 5 seasons before the color line was established; and

(4) made a timeless contribution to baseball by authoring his book, “Sol White’s Official Base Ball Guide”, the first history of Black baseball before 1900;

Whereas we congratulate J.L. Wilkinson, a creative and innovative team owner who—

(1) owned the Kansas City Monarchs, the All Nations club, and 1 of the first professional women’s teams in the United States;

(2) was a pioneer of night baseball and various ball-park promotions;

(3) was the only White owner of the Negro National League when it was chartered in 1920; and

(4) ran the longest running franchise in Negro National League history during which his teams won an unprecedented 17 pennants and 2 World Series;

Whereas we congratulate Jud Wilson, an intense first and third baseman who—

(1) ranks among the top 10 all-time in home runs, RBIs, hits, total bases, slugging average, and batting average in the Negro Leagues;

(2) holds a lifetime batting average over .340;

(3) earned from fans the nickname Boojum, after the sound that his line drives made when slamming off the fences; and

(4) played on pennant-winning teams as a member of the Baltimore Black Sox, Philadelphia Stars, and Homestead Grays;

Whereas those baseball legends will be inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame on July 30, 2006, in Cooperstown, New York, joining former Negro Leagues players Ernie Banks, Hank Aaron, Jackie Robinson, Larry Doby, Monte Irvin, Roy Campanella, “Satchel” Paige, Willie Mays, Bill Foster, “Buck” Leonard, “Bullet” Rogan, “Cool Papa” Bell, Hilton Smith, “Smokey” Joe Williams, Josh Gibson, “Judy” Johnson, Leon Day, Martin Dihigo, Oscar Charleston, “Pop” Lloyd, Ray Dandridge, “Rube” Foster, “Turkey” Stearnes, and Willie Wells, as members of the National Baseball Hall of Fame; and

Whereas we congratulate the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, the only public museum in the Nation that exists for the exclusive purpose of interpreting the experiences of the players in the Negro Leagues, founded in 1990 by Negro Leagues legend Buck O’Neil, Horace Peterson, former Kansas City Monarchs outfielder Al “Slick” Surratt, and other former Negro Leagues players, for the tireless efforts of the museum to preserve the evidence of honor, courage, sacrifice, and triumph in the face of segregation of those Af-

rican Americans who played in the Negro Leagues through its comprehensive collection of historical materials, important artifacts, and oral histories of the participants in the Negro Leagues and the impact that segregation had in the lives of the players and their fans: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) congratulates Ray Brown, Willard Brown,
3 Andy Cooper, Frank Grant, Pete Hill, Biz Mackey,
4 Effa Manley, Joe Mendez, Alex Pompez, Cum Posey,
5 Louis Santop, Mule Suttles, Ben Taylor, Cristobal
6 Torriente, Sol White, J.L. Wilkinson, and Jud Wil-
7 son on being elected to the National Baseball Hall
8 of Fame Class of 2006;

9 (2) commends the National Baseball Hall of
10 Fame and the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum for
11 their efforts to ensure that these legends of baseball
12 receive the recognition due to players of their cal-
13 iber; and

14 (3) respectfully requests the Enrolling Clerk of
15 the Senate to transmit an enrolled copy of this reso-
16 lution to—

17 (A) the National Baseball Hall of Fame;
18 and

19 (B) the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum.

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