

111TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. J. RES. 81

Recognizing Madam C.J. Walker for her achievements as a trailblazing woman in business, philanthropist, and 20th century activist for social justice.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 16, 2010

Mr. RANGEL introduced the following joint resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

JOINT RESOLUTION

Recognizing Madam C.J. Walker for her achievements as a trailblazing woman in business, philanthropist, and 20th century activist for social justice.

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker was born on December 23, 1867, on a plantation in Delta, Louisiana;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker was the fifth of six children born to freed slaves Owen and Minerva Anderson Breedlove, and the first of the Breedloves' children born after the end of slavery;

Whereas, in 1905, Madam C.J. Walker invented a conditioning treatment designed to improve the health of Black women's hair;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker was a pioneer of what has become a multibillion dollar international cosmetics industry;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker established a groundbreaking national and international business empire, first selling products door-to-door, then developing a marketing strategy, which included selling products through the mail;

Whereas, in 1910, Madam C.J. Walker built a factory on land she purchased in Indianapolis, Indiana, to manufacture her line of cosmetic products, a historic achievement for a Black businessperson of that time;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker was committed to employing women in all aspects of her business, training well over 1,000 agents across the Nation and fostering the entry of Black women into the business world;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker's central message was pride and empowerment;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker used her charisma, along with an army of sales agents, to sell her cosmetic products, a strategy that has influenced the marketing of beauty products since that time;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker utilized her connections to Black church communities to build her network of agents and develop word-of-mouth advertising for her products;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker crisscrossed the Nation by train, and, during her travels, stayed in the homes of Black families because she was prohibited from lodging in hotels due to her race;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker was a noted philanthropist, giving generously to charities, including the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Young Women's Chris-

tian Association (YWCA), National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and National Association of Colored Women (NAC), and other organizations;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker encouraged her agents to provide financial assistance to Black humanitarian organizations across the Nation;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker used her influence to speak out against social injustices, including lynching;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker was one of the Nation's most successful businesspersons of the early 20th century, widely believed to be America's first self-made female millionaire;

Whereas in her rise to success, Madam C.J. Walker overcame barriers due to the circumstances of her time, including pervasive racial discrimination, restricted access to education, and limited opportunities for women in business;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker has two historic landmarks attributed to her, the Madame Walker Theatre Center, located in Indianapolis, Indiana, and her estate, Villa Lewaro, located in Irvington-on-Hudson, New York;

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker has been honored in the National Business Hall of Fame at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago and the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, New York;

Whereas, in 1998, Madam C.J. Walker was honored on a United States postage stamp as part of the Black Heritage Series; and

Whereas Madam C.J. Walker died on May 25, 1919, at the age of 51: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 That it is hereby recognized that Madam C.J. Walker is
4 one of history's greatest businesspersons, and a role model
5 for women, African-Americans, small businesses, entre-
6 preneurs, and the Nation's young people.

