

111TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1367

Recognizing the significance of the Haitian flag to the people of Haiti and supporting the goals and ideals of Haitian Flag Day.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 18, 2010

Ms. CLARKE (for herself, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. MCMAHON, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. FILNER, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. LEE of California, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the significance of the Haitian flag to the people of Haiti and supporting the goals and ideals of Haitian Flag Day.

Whereas Haitian Flag Day is celebrated annually on May 18, marking the date of creation of the first Haitian flag sewn by Catherine Flon, on May 18, 1803, in Arcahaie, Haiti;

Whereas the Haitian flag is a symbol of pride, unity, individual liberty, and is tightly linked to the country's history of struggle and freedom;

Whereas the Haitian flag is also a commemoration of the heroes of Haiti's history, Toussaint L'Ouverture, Jean-

Jacques Dessalines, Alexandre Petion, and Capois La Mort;

Whereas Haitian Flag Day is a major Haitian national holiday celebrated with great fanfare on the grounds of the national palace and all cities in the country;

Whereas Haitian Flag Day is also celebrated in other countries with large Haitian populations, such as the United States;

Whereas the Haitian Revolution was the only successful slave revolt in world history, resulting in Haiti becoming the first Black sovereign nation;

Whereas Haiti also became the second free republic in the Western Hemisphere, after the United States;

Whereas, on August 21, 1791, the Haitian Revolution began its struggle against the French occupation;

Whereas from 1791 to 1793, the revolt became more widespread and gave rise to a number of large groups still fighting independently;

Whereas the slave movement found some synergy and came to follow the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture;

Whereas Toussaint L'Ouverture led the entire war under the French blue, white, and red flag;

Whereas after the capture of L'Ouverture, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, his successor, modified the flag by stripping the white band from the flag, which led to the red and blue design and inserting the coat of arms in the center which carry the words, "L'Union fait la force" meaning "through Unity, there is Strength";

Whereas the red symbolizes the blood and the sacrifices made by the heroes of the Haitian Revolution, and the blue is emblematic of hope and unity;

Whereas the Haitian Revolution was one of the most influential uprisings in the Western Hemisphere, sparking slave revolts throughout the Caribbean which forced the eventual end of slavery in the British and French Caribbean;

Whereas the Haitian Revolution also inspired the three major slave revolts in the United States, Gabrielle Prosser in 1800, Denmark Vesey in 1822, and Nat Turner in 1830;

Whereas the Trinidadian born historian, C.L.R. James, stated that the Haitian Revolution was the first in the chain of Pan-African revolts that led to independence throughout Africa;

Whereas the defeat of the French Army by the Haitian people ruined Napoleon Bonaparte's plan to expand the French Empire in the west, by forcing France to sell the Louisiana Territory to the United States at 4 cents per acre;

Whereas the Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the United States by 828,000 square miles from Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains and from the Gulf of Mexico to Canada;

Whereas this was considered the biggest land deal in the history of the United States;

Whereas the Haitian Army, led by Dessalines, devastated Rochembeau and the French Army at the Battle of Vertières on November 18, 1803;

Whereas, on January 1, 1804, Dessalines declared independence, reclaiming the indigenous Taíno name of Haiti ("Land of Mountains") for the new nation;

Whereas 206 years after independence, Haiti's history has been one of challenge and resilience;

Whereas recently, the earthquake of January 12, 2010, killed over 200,000 people, shattered the economy, and leveled its infrastructure;

Whereas as the Haitian people and the Haitian Diaspora attempt to rebuild the island nation, Haitians look to their flag as a symbol of hope, courage, and pride;

Whereas the Haitian flag serves as a treasured symbol of those who lost their lives in the struggle for freedom from oppression and as a reminder of their proud history; and

Whereas, May 18, 2010, is recognized as Haitian Flag Day:
Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives recog-
2 nizes the significance of the Haitian Flag to the people
3 of Haiti and supports the goals and ideals of Haitian Flag
4 Day.

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