

HJR25 INTRODUCED



1 HJR25
2 4UXF4I3-1
3 By Representatives Warren, Hollis, Drummond, Forte, Clarke,
4 Moore (M)
5 RFD: Rules
6 First Read: 15-Jan-26



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4 HJR___ RECOGNIZING APRIL 5, 2026, AS BOOKER T. WASHINGTON
5 DAY IN THE STATE OF ALABAMA.
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7 WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of Alabama
8 takes great pride and pleasure in recognizing and declaring
9 April 5, 2026, as Booker T. Washington Day; Washington was a
10 prominent Black educator, author, and leader who made
11 significant contributions to the advancement of African
12 Americans in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; in
13 Alabama, he is most known for serving as the first President
14 of Tuskegee Institute, which became Tuskegee University; and

15 WHEREAS, Booker Taliaferro Washington was born in
16 Hale's Ford, Virginia, on a small tobacco farm near
17 present-day Smith Mountain Lake; because Washington was
18 enslaved, and few birth records were kept for enslaved
19 workers, his birth date is said to be April 5, 1856;
20 Washington lived with his mother, Jane, who was the
21 plantation's cook, and his siblings, John and Amanda, in a
22 tiny, one-room log cabin that also served as the plantation
23 kitchen; and

24 WHEREAS, following the emancipation of Black people,
25 Washington gained a primary education by working in the
26 mornings and evenings and attending school during the day;
27 in 1872, at age 16, Washington entered Hampton Normal and
28 Agricultural Institute, now Hampton University, in Hampton,



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29 Virginia; he excelled as a student and graduated in 1875,
30 later being recruited as a teacher by Hampton Institute;
31 Washington became such an exemplary teacher and speaker that
32 he was invited to join the administration of the newly
33 established Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, which
34 is known today as Tuskegee University in Macon County,
35 Alabama; the school opened its doors on July 4, 1881, with a
36 curriculum that focused on academic and skills-based
37 education for men and women; as the Institute's first
38 President, Washington's aim was to teach trade skills to
39 African Americans so they could find employment that would
40 move them out of poverty; as part of their education,
41 students built the Tuskegee campus from the ground up by
42 making bricks, building classrooms, barns, and outbuildings,
43 growing crops, and raising livestock; and

44 WHEREAS, Washington became a leading voice for
45 industrial-vocational education and a measured approach
46 toward gaining civil rights for Black people; his leadership
47 at Tuskegee Institute had a lasting impact on African
48 American education, and the university continues to be a
49 leading institution of higher learning; and

50 WHEREAS, while controversial to some, one of
51 Washington's most significant accomplishments was his 1895
52 Atlanta Compromise speech, delivered at the Cotton States
53 and International Exposition in Atlanta, Georgia; in his
54 speech, Washington called for cooperation between Black and
55 white Americans, particularly in the South; he emphasized
56 the importance of African Americans focusing on economic



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57 advancement and self-improvement; and

58 WHEREAS, Washington opened an agricultural school as
59 an outreach of Tuskegee Institute, for which he hired George
60 Washington Carver to lead in 1896; his accomplishments were
61 not just limited to the educational domain, however;
62 Washington also founded the National Negro Business League
63 in 1900, which provided consultation services to Black
64 business owners; politically, he advised presidents William
65 McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and William Taft on race
66 relations in the United States and often on political
67 appointments; and

68 WHEREAS, through his writings, speeches, and
69 leadership, Washington advocated for economic progress,
70 self-reliance, and practical education as essential tools
71 for African American empowerment; his work had a lasting
72 impact on education, entrepreneurship, and the Civil Rights
73 movement in Alabama and all across the nation; now
74 therefore,

75 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
76 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That we take great pleasure in
77 recognizing April 5, 2026, as Booker T. Washington Day in
78 the State of Alabama, in celebration of his profound
79 contributions to the advancement and education of African
80 Americans and to the betterment of American society.