

2023-J2022

Senate Resolution No. 2022

BY: Senator MYRIE

HONORING the contributions made by Black Baseball
to the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is with great pride that this Legislative Body commends those exceptional Black athletes who represented the State of New York and brought honor to the game of professional baseball, distinguishing themselves through notable achievement and thereby representing this great Empire State with exceptional dignity and determination; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor the contributions made by Black Baseball to the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, The contributions of Black athletes have helped the sport of baseball grow into a globally loved phenomenon; the first recorded game between two organized Black baseball clubs, pre-dating the official formation of leagues, was between the Unknown Club of Weeksville and the Henson Baseball Club of Jamaica, Queens; and

WHEREAS, Black baseball served as an immense point of pride for Black New Yorkers and provided opportunities for community gathering, entertainment, and economic success; and

WHEREAS, The City of New York and the State has hosted several Negro League teams in the past, such as Unknown Club of Weekfield, Monitor

Club, Unique Club, and many more remarkable teams; and

WHEREAS, Moses Fleetwood Walker was the first Black man to join a Major League Baseball (MLB) team in 1884, joining the Toledo Blue Stockings and playing with them for 42 games; and

WHEREAS, Black baseball players have been rightfully established by the MLB into "Major League Status"; teams that set a precedent for the history of baseball are: New York Black Yankees (1931 - 1948); Brooklyn Eagles (1935); Brooklyn Royal Giants (1904 - 1927); New York Lincoln Giants (1911 - 1929); Cuban Stars (1907 - 1930); New York Cubans (1930 - 1950); and the Brooklyn Brown Dodgers (1945 - 1946), a team established by Branch Rickey who would famously go on to sign Jackie Robinson to the Brooklyn Dodgers; and

WHEREAS, New York-based Black baseball teams hosted games featuring Toni Stone, Connie Morgan, and Maime Johnson, groundbreaking women who played alongside their male colleagues and where, according to contemporaneous reports, "(took) a backseat to no one on the field" ; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individuals of such outstanding athletic accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be recognized by all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor the contributions made by Black Baseball to the State of New York.