

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1254

Establishing a task force to recommend an appropriate recognition of the historic life and career of Representative Joseph Rainey of South Carolina on the 150th anniversary of his becoming a Member of the House of Representatives.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 9, 2020

Mr. MCCARTHY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on House Administration

RESOLUTION

Establishing a task force to recommend an appropriate recognition of the historic life and career of Representative Joseph Rainey of South Carolina on the 150th anniversary of his becoming a Member of the House of Representatives.

Whereas Joseph Hayne Rainey was born enslaved on June 21, 1832, in Georgetown, South Carolina;

Whereas Joseph Rainey learned the barbering trade from his father, Edward Rainey;

Whereas Edward Rainey used profits from his work as a barber to buy his and his family's freedom in the 1840's;

Whereas Joseph Rainey eventually moved with his family to Charleston, South Carolina;

Whereas in 1859, Joseph Rainey married his wife, Susan, with whom he had three children, Joseph II, Herbert, and Olive;

Whereas during the Civil War, in 1862, Joseph Rainey and his wife and family escaped to Bermuda, a British colony that had abolished slavery in 1834, and undertook successful entrepreneurial endeavors together;

Whereas in 1866 the Rainey family moved back to Charleston, South Carolina, after the Civil War had ended;

Whereas Joseph H. Rainey co-founded the State Republican Party and represented Georgetown, South Carolina, on the party's central committee in 1867;

Whereas Joseph Rainey participated in the South Carolina State constitutional convention in 1868;

Whereas Joseph Rainey was first elected to public office in 1870, when he won a seat in the State Senate;

Whereas Joseph Rainey won election to the House of Representatives in 1870, and was the first African American to serve as a Member of the House of Representatives;

Whereas Joseph Rainey was sworn in as a member of the House of Representatives on December 12, 1870, to represent the First District of South Carolina in the Forty-First Congress;

Whereas Joseph Rainey became the first African American to preside over the House of Representatives by taking the chair in April 1874;

Whereas Joseph Rainey was an active and effective member of Congress, serving with distinction on a number of committees including the Committee on Freedmen's Af-

fairs, the committee handling all legislation concerning people freed from slavery;

Whereas Joseph Rainey was a tireless advocate for civil rights and equality; and a forceful proponent of desegregation in transportation, public accommodations, and especially education; and

Whereas Joseph Rainey retired from the House of Representatives on March 3, 1879: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved,*

2 **SECTION 1. TASK FORCE FOR RECOGNITION OF LIFE AND**
 3 **CAREER OF THE HONORABLE JOSEPH**
 4 **RAINEY.**

5 (a) ESTABLISHMENT; COMPOSITION.—There is es-
 6 tablished in the House of Representatives a task force, to
 7 be composed of the Clerk and the Historian of the House
 8 of Representatives and the Architect of the Capitol, to rec-
 9 ommend an appropriate recognition for the historic life
 10 and career of the Honorable Joseph Rainey of South Caro-
 11 lina, the first African American to serve as a Member of
 12 the House of Representatives.

13 (b) DUTIES.—The task force established under this
 14 section shall—

15 (1) produce a summary document of the
 16 achievements of the Honorable Joseph Rainey and
 17 the Reconstruction-Era generation of African-Amer-
 18 ican Members of the House of Representatives; and

1 (2) recommend an appropriate recognition of
2 those achievements which could be displayed in a
3 prominent location in, or near, the House side of the
4 United States Capitol.

5 (c) DEADLINE.—The task force shall complete its du-
6 ties under this section not later than 90 days after the
7 adoption of this resolution.

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