

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 36

Acknowledging the 40th anniversary of the election of Shirley Anita St. Hill Chisholm, the first African-American woman in Congress.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 8, 2009

Ms. LEE of California (for herself, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. STARK, Mr. RUSH, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. RICHARDSON, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland, and Ms. WOOLSEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on House Administration

RESOLUTION

Acknowledging the 40th anniversary of the election of Shirley Anita St. Hill Chisholm, the first African-American woman in Congress.

Whereas January 2009 marks the 40th anniversary of the first African-American woman sworn into Congress, Shirley Anita St. Hill Chisholm;

Whereas when she was elected to Congress in 1968 to serve in New York's 12th Congressional District, Congress-

woman Chisholm surpassed the twin obstacles of racism and sexism to win the election;

Whereas, Congresswoman Chisholm, who considered herself the “people’s politician”, dutifully served Congress from 1969 to 1983 with a loud, clear voice that lived up to her slogan of being “unbought and unbossed”;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm challenged political convention when she boldly disputed the House of Representative’s seniority system after being placed on the Committee on Agriculture, a selection that would do little to benefit her urban district;

Whereas she demanded reassignment and was placed on the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, a better fit for her district;

Whereas after serving on the Committee on Education and Labor for several years, Congresswoman Chisholm accepted a prestigious seat on the Committee on Rules, becoming the first African-American woman and second woman ever to serve on the powerful panel;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm was a trailblazer who fought tirelessly to end the draft and the Vietnam war;

Whereas she was a fierce defender of Federal assistance for education and served as a strong voice in support of the national school lunch bill;

Whereas in 1972, “Fighting Shirley”, her defining slogan, showed the same tenacity that allowed her to defy the odds in 1968 and declared her candidacy for Democratic nomination for the President, becoming the first African-American to run for a major-party presidential nomination;

Whereas although Congresswoman Chisholm was not elected as the Democratic candidate, her campaign “Chisholm for President” inspired people in the United States from all walks of life to get politically active;

Whereas Congresswoman Chisholm knew that people who had been shut out of the political process in the United States needed a voice and an opportunity to participate so she galvanized people around the country to get involved;

Whereas as a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus, Congresswoman Chisholm witnessed African-American representation in the Congress grow and welcomed other African-American Congresswomen;

Whereas today, 14 African-American Congresswomen now follow the path paved for them by Congresswoman Chisholm; and

Whereas although Congresswoman Chisholm is no longer serving in Congress, she left an indelible legacy not just as an African-American female legislator, but as a passionate and capable lawmaker dedicated to improving education, housing, and health care: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) acknowledges the 40th anniversary of the
3 election of Shirley Anita St. Hill Chisholm, the first
4 African-American woman in Congress;

5 (2) pays tribute to the service of Congress-
6 woman Shirley Chisholm, her work to improve the
7 lives of women and minorities, her steadfast commit-

1 ment to demonstrating the power of compassion, and
2 her dedication to justice and equality;

3 (3) recognizes Congresswoman Chisholm's dedi-
4 cated work in promoting the rights of all individuals
5 in the United States, particularly in the areas of
6 education, employment, and health care; and

7 (4) appreciates Congresswoman Chisholm's ex-
8 traordinary work, the example of her life, and her
9 legacy which have inspired and empowered many to
10 devote their lives to public service.

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