

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. RES. 850

Designating the House Press Gallery as the “Frederick Douglass Press Gallery”.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 7, 2023

Mr. DONALDS (for himself, Mr. CARSON, Mr. HUNT, Mr. JAMES, and Mr. OWENS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on House Administration

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## RESOLUTION

Designating the House Press Gallery as the “Frederick Douglass Press Gallery”.

Whereas Frederick Douglass was born to an enslaved family in 1818;

Whereas Douglass bravely escaped slavery in 1838, and spent much of his adult life as a journalist in Rochester, New York;

Whereas Douglass published his first newspaper, The North Star, using his own money in the pre-Civil War era;

Whereas Douglass was known for fiercely opposing slavery, championing equal rights and women’s rights and for being a forceful speaker;

Whereas, during the Civil War, Douglass was a recruiter for the first African-American army regiment;

Whereas Douglass met twice with President Lincoln, first about the pay and treatment of Black soldiers and then to discuss the President's desire to assist escaping slaves;

Whereas after Douglass' Rochester home was destroyed by fire (which Douglass believed resulted from arson), he moved his family to Anacostia in Washington, DC;

Whereas, in 1870, Douglass was asked to become editor of the New National Era, which chronicled the progress of Blacks throughout the United States, and he later bought the paper;

Whereas Douglass was the first Black reporter allowed into the Capitol press galleries, where journalists watch lawmakers on the floors of the Senate and the House of Representatives;

Whereas Douglass was a member of the congressional press galleries from 1871–1875;

Whereas Douglass reported on House and Senate legislation regularly to update the African-American community during Reconstruction following the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution;

Whereas Douglass was recorded frequently in the congressional directory and spent a significant amount of time writing and studying from the House Press Gallery;

Whereas Douglass often visited the Capitol following his time as a member of the congressional press galleries;

Whereas Douglass delivered the keynote speech at the unveiling of the Emancipation Memorial in Washington's Lincoln Park;

Whereas, in 2007, Douglass was recognized by placing a plaque and painting of him in his honor in the House Press Gallery;

Whereas, in 2012, Congress passed and the President signed Public Law 112–174, which directed Frederick Douglass’ statue placement in the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center’s Emancipation Hall; and

Whereas Douglass was a pioneer in journalism who broke through glass ceilings throughout one of the most crucial times in American history, exacerbated great perseverance to become an American hero, and became a legend known in the House Press Gallery: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House Press Gallery is designated  
2 as the “Frederick Douglass Press Gallery”.

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