

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 18

Rep. McKinney offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to honor the one hundred and third anniversary of
2 Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, and declare January 16, 2023,
3 as Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, Founders' Day in the state
4 of Michigan.

5 Whereas, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, was founded on
6 January 16, 1920, on the campus of Howard University in Washington,
7 D.C. on the founding principles of Scholarship, Service, Sisterhood
8 and Finer Womanhood; and

9 Whereas, The founders of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated,
10 believed in the need for a new and different type of Greek-letter
11 organization and acted upon that need. To these women, Zeta was
12 more than an organization. It was a movement, a belief system that
13 reflected, at its core, the desire to provide true Service, to

1 embrace Scholarship, to set a standard for Sisterly Love and to
2 define the noble concept of Finer Womanhood. This belief has
3 sustained and encouraged Zetas around the world to hold fast to the
4 ideals initiated and developed by its earliest members; and

5 Whereas, The five founders of Zeta, Arizona Cleaver Stemons,
6 Pearl Anna Neal, Myrtle Tyler Faithful, Viola Tyler Goings, and
7 Fannie Pettie Watts were strong, principled coeds who possessed a
8 great deal of modesty, strength of character and pride in academic
9 achievement. The Founders, the Five Pearls, are indeed a worthy
10 foundation upon which to base the illustrious Zeta Phi Beta
11 Sorority, Inc.; and

12 Whereas, These five coeds envisioned a sorority which would
13 directly affect positive change, chart a course of action for the
14 1920s and beyond, raise the community's consciousness, encourage
15 the highest standards of scholastic achievement, and foster a
16 greater sense of unity among its members; and

17 Whereas, These women believed that sorority elitism and
18 socializing overshadowed the real mission for progressive
19 organizations and failed to address fully the societal mores, ills,
20 prejudices, and poverty affecting humanity in general and the black
21 community in particular; and

22 Whereas, Since its inception, Zeta has continued its steady
23 climb into the national and international spotlight with programs
24 designed to demonstrate concern for the human condition. Zeta Phi
25 Beta Sorority, Incorporated is honored to have formed many
26 wonderful community-based partnerships over the past 103 years.
27 Community service programs called Z-HOPE™ (Zetas Helping Other
28 People Excel) include the National Educational Foundation, the
29 Elder Care Initiative, Stork's Nest, March of Dimes, Adopt-A-

1 School, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Micha's Voice,
2 International Women of Color, Triple Negative Breast Cancer, Women
3 Veterans Rock, and Zeta Sings the Blues; and

4 Whereas, The organization has been innovative in that it has
5 chronicled a number of firsts. It was the first National Pan-
6 Hellenic Council organization to centralize its operations in a
7 national headquarters, first to charter a chapter in Africa, first
8 to form auxiliary groups, and first to be constitutionally bound to
9 a fraternity, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.; and

10 Whereas, The sorority takes pride in its continued
11 participation in transforming communities through volunteer
12 services from members and its auxiliaries. Zeta Phi Beta has
13 chartered hundreds of chapters worldwide and has a membership of
14 over 100,000; and

15 Whereas, Sorority members from Michigan have contributed to
16 the deep centennial history of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority,
17 Incorporated. In 1941, the Omega Alpha Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta
18 Sorority, Incorporated, was established at Wayne State University
19 in Detroit. In 1943, Soror Mary Watson Stewart of Detroit became
20 the Central Regional Director for Zeta Phi Beta Sorority,
21 Incorporated; and

22 Whereas, In 1947, the sorority's regions were reorganized and
23 renamed. The Great Lakes Region was created and Michigan was
24 included; and

25 Whereas, In 1958, Founder Myrtle Tyler Faithful was present as
26 her daughter, Frances Faithful, became a charter member of Zeta
27 Beta Zeta Chapter in Flint, Michigan; and

28 Whereas, Soror Ione Hartley Gibson of Beta Omicron Zeta
29 Chapter of Detroit, served as Associate Director for the Great

1 Lakes region from 1955 to 1960. Soror Frances Faithful of Zeta Beta
2 Zeta of Flint served as the next Associate Director from 1960 to
3 1962. Both were appointed by Great Lakes Regional Director, Soror
4 Margaret Irby; and

5 Whereas, The official Michigan State Organization for the
6 sorority was born under the leadership of Soror Ione Hartley Gibson
7 as State Director. It was Soror Ione Hartley Gibson who initiated
8 the first State Meeting in 1967, with four chapters, Beta Omicron
9 Zeta, Zeta Beta Zeta, Zeta Nu Zeta, and Zeta Omega Zeta; and

10 Whereas, The Michigan State Organization of Zeta Phi Beta
11 Sorority, Incorporated, under the leadership of State Director
12 Lynese Thomas, continues to provide Scholarship, Service,
13 Sisterhood, and Finer Womanhood to the great state of Michigan, as
14 an integral part of the Great Lakes Region with eighteen Graduate
15 Chapters, thirteen Undergraduate Chapters, seven Amicae Auxiliaries
16 and 10 Youth Affiliates (Archonettes, Amicettes, and Pearlettes);
17 and

18 Whereas, The Michigan State Organization of Zeta Phi Beta
19 Sorority, Incorporated, is committed to preserving the historical
20 summer resort cottage in Idlewild, Michigan, called Birch Haven. In
21 1937, Soror Violette Neatley Anderson, the first African-American
22 woman to practice law in the state of Illinois, the first African-
23 American woman to be admitted to practice before for the Supreme
24 Court of the United States and the eighth Grand Basileus of Zeta
25 Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, bequeathed the Michigan cottage to
26 the sorority; and

27 Whereas, In September 2005, Ione Hartley Gibson who served as
28 the Great Lakes Regional Director from 1962 to 1969 was honored
29 with a room dedicated to her memory at Birch Haven. Soror Gibson

1 served Zeta Phi Beta Sorority in multiple capacities, including
2 resident agent to Birch Haven; and

3 Whereas, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. has entered the 103rd
4 year of its Finer legacy, it retains its original zest for
5 excellence, never tiring in their efforts as a community-conscious,
6 action-oriented organization dedicated to transforming the lives of
7 others. Zeta represents diverse careers ranging from businesswomen,
8 elected officials, educators, doctors, nurses, military, and
9 attorneys. The sisterhood is strong and cannot be broken. In the
10 "Year of the International Woman" Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. is
11 poised to "Embrace The Swell" by providing service, world-wide
12 wellness, extraordinary leadership and legacy at home and abroad;
13 now, therefore, be it

14 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of
15 this legislative body honor the one hundred and third anniversary
16 of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, and declare January 16,
17 2023, as Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, Founders' Day in the
18 state of Michigan; and be it further

19 Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to Dr.
20 Stacie N.C. Grant, 26th International President & CEO of Zeta Phi
21 Beta Sorority, Incorporated, to Keisha Smith, the Great Lakes
22 Regional Director for Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, and to
23 Lynese Thomas, Director, Michigan State Organization, Zeta Phi Beta
24 Sorority, Incorporated, at the national headquarters for Zeta Phi
25 Beta Sorority, Incorporated.