

Union Calendar No. 265

108TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 1233

[Report No. 108-372, Part I]

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 15, 2003

Referred to the Committee on Resources, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

NOVEMBER 17, 2003

Reported from the Committee on Resources

NOVEMBER 17, 2003

Referral to the Committee on the Judiciary extended for a period ending not later than November 21, 2003

NOVEMBER 21, 2003

Referral to the Committee on the Judiciary extended for a period ending not later than January 31, 2004

JANUARY 31, 2004

Referral to the Committee on the Judiciary extended for a period ending not later than March 2, 2004

FEBRUARY 26, 2004

Referral to the Committee on the Judiciary extended for a period ending not later than April 2, 2004

APRIL 2, 2004

Committee on the Judiciary discharged; committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

AN ACT

To authorize assistance for the National Great Blacks in Wax Museum and Justice Learning Center.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Great Black
5 Americans Commemoration Act of 2003”

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Black Americans have served honorably in
9 Congress, in senior executive branch positions, in the
10 law, the judiciary, and other fields, yet their record
11 of service is not well known by the public, is not in-
12 cluded in school history lessons, and is not ade-
13 quately presented in the Nation’s museums.

14 (2) The Great Blacks in Wax Museum, Inc. in
15 Baltimore, Maryland, a nonprofit organization, is
16 the Nation’s first wax museum presenting the his-
17 tory of great Black Americans, including those who
18 have served in Congress, in senior executive branch
19 positions, in the law, the judiciary, and other fields,
20 as well as others who have made significant con-
21 tributions to benefit the Nation.

1 (3) The Great Blacks in Wax Museum, Inc.
2 plans to expand its existing facilities to establish the
3 National Great Blacks in Wax Museum and Justice
4 Learning Center, which is intended to serve as a na-
5 tional museum and center for presentation of wax
6 figures and related interactive educational exhibits
7 portraying the history of great Black Americans.

8 (4) The wax medium has long been recognized
9 as a unique and artistic means to record human his-
10 tory through preservation of the faces and person-
11 ages of people of prominence, and historically, wax
12 exhibits were used to commemorate noted figures in
13 ancient Egypt, Babylon, Greece, and Rome, in me-
14 dieval Europe, and in the art of the Italian renais-
15 sance.

16 (5) The Great Blacks in Wax Museum, Inc. was
17 founded in 1983 by Drs. Elmer and Joanne Martin,
18 2 Baltimore educators who used their personal sav-
19 ings to purchase wax figures, which they displayed
20 in schools, churches, shopping malls, and festivals in
21 the mid-Atlantic region.

22 (6) The goal of the Martins was to test public
23 reaction to the idea of a Black history wax museum
24 and so positive was the response over time that the

1 museum has been heralded by the public and the
2 media as a national treasure.

3 (7) The museum has been the subject of feature
4 stories by CNN, the Wall Street Journal, the Balti-
5 more Sun, the Washington Post, the New York
6 Times, the Chicago Sun Times, the Dallas Morning
7 News, the Los Angeles Times, USA Today, the Afro
8 American Newspaper, Crisis, Essence Magazine, and
9 others.

10 (8) More than 300,000 people from across the
11 Nation visit the museum annually.

12 (9) The new museum will carry on the time
13 honored artistic tradition of the wax medium; in par-
14 ticular, it will recognize the significant value of this
15 medium to commemorate and appreciate great Black
16 Americans whose faces and personages are not wide-
17 ly recognized.

18 (10) The museum will employ the most skilled
19 artisans in the wax medium, use state-of-the-art
20 interactive exhibition technologies, and consult with
21 museum professionals throughout the Nation, and
22 its exhibits will feature the following:

23 (A) Blacks who have served in the Senate
24 and House of Representatives of the United
25 States, including those who represented con-

1 stituencies in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Lou-
2 isiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Caro-
3 lina, and Virginia during the 19th century.

4 (B) Blacks who have served in the judici-
5 ary, in the Department of Justice, as prominent
6 attorneys, in law enforcement, and in the strug-
7 gle for equal rights under the law.

8 (C) Black veterans of various military en-
9 gagements, including the Buffalo Soldiers and
10 Tuskegee Airmen, and the role of Blacks in the
11 settlement of the western United States.

12 (D) Blacks who have served in senior exec-
13 utive branch positions, including members of
14 Presidents' Cabinets, Assistant Secretaries and
15 Deputy Secretaries of Federal agencies, and
16 Presidential advisers.

17 (E) Other Blacks whose accomplishments
18 and contributions to human history during the
19 last millennium and to the Nation through
20 more than 400 years are exemplary, including
21 Black educators, authors, scientists, inventors,
22 athletes, clergy, and civil rights leaders.

23 (11) The museum plans to develop collaborative
24 programs with other museums, serve as a clearing-
25 house for training, technical assistance, and other

1 resources involving use of the wax medium, and
2 sponsor traveling exhibits to provide enriching mu-
3 seum experiences for communities throughout the
4 Nation.

5 (12) The museum has been recognized by the
6 State of Maryland and the city of Baltimore as a
7 preeminent facility for presenting and interpreting
8 Black history, using the wax medium in its highest
9 artistic form.

10 (13) The museum is located in the heart of an
11 area designated as an empowerment zone, and is
12 considered to be a catalyst for economic and cultural
13 improvements in this economically disadvantaged
14 area.

15 **SEC. 3. ASSISTANCE FOR NATIONAL GREAT BLACKS IN WAX**
16 **MUSEUM AND JUSTICE LEARNING CENTER.**

17 (a) ASSISTANCE FOR MUSEUM.—Subject to sub-
18 section (b), the Attorney General, acting through the Of-
19 fice of Justice Programs of the Department of Justice,
20 shall, from amounts made available under subsection (c),
21 make a grant to the Great Blacks in Wax Museum, Inc.
22 in Baltimore, Maryland, to pay the Federal share of the
23 costs of expanding and creating the National Great Blacks
24 in Wax Museum and Justice Learning Center, including
25 the cost of its design, planning, furnishing, and equipping.

1 (b) GRANT REQUIREMENTS.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—To receive a grant under
3 subsection (a), the Great Blacks in Wax Museum,
4 Inc. shall submit to the Attorney General a proposal
5 for the use of the grant, which shall include detailed
6 plans for the design, construction, furnishing, and
7 equipping of the National Great Blacks in Wax Mu-
8 seum and Justice Learning Center.

9 (2) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of
10 the costs described in subsection (a) shall not exceed
11 25 percent.

12 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
13 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
14 \$15,000,000, to remain available until expended.

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