

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 766

Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Schomburg Center
for Research in Black Culture.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 26, 2025

Mr. ESPAILLAT submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

Whereas the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, a research library of The New York Public Library, is recognized as one of the world's leading institutions devoted to the preservation, study, and celebration of Black and African life, history, and culture, serving as both a community anchor in Harlem and internationally renowned research library;

Whereas the Schomburg Center has nurtured generations of writers, scholars, artists, and activists, from Langston Hughes and James Baldwin to Augusta Savage and contemporary voices shaping the global conversation on race and identity, ensuring its continued role as the living re-

minder of the Harlem Renaissance and a cornerstone of African and African Diasporic studies;

Whereas, on July 14, 1905, a newly constructed library building in Harlem at 103 West 135th Street opened, with the title of 135th Street Branch Public Library, with a collection of over 10,000 books and goal of serving the neighborhood;

Whereas, in 1920, Ernestine Rose became the branch librarian of the 135th Street Branch and immediately instituted changes in the branch to serve the needs of the vibrant African and Latino community that would make the library a hub of the Harlem Renaissance;

Whereas the branch has been a leader in integration and diversity in New York City, with the hiring of the first African-American librarian, Catherine Allen Latimer, and hiring the first Puerto Rican librarian, Pura Teresa Belpré;

Whereas the branch has been a focal point of the Harlem Renaissance, as a meeting place of intellectuals and artists and the only library branch in New York City which employed Black librarians, and met the community requests to feature Black artists and literature;

Whereas resourceful librarians and community leaders advocated for the creation of the Division of Negro Literature, History, and Prints, the forerunner of the Schomburg Center, on May 8, 1925;

Whereas Arturo Alfonso Schomburg, an acclaimed Afro-Latino historian and archivist, sold much of his collection to The New York Public Library for the 135th Street Branch and became the curator of the Division of Negro Literature, History and Prints;

Whereas, upon Schomburg's untimely passing, the Division was renamed in his honor to the Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature, and eventually the entire branch was named the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture;

Whereas, being inspired by the teachings of W.E.B. Du Bois, the American Negro Theatre was founded in the basement auditorium, with the belief that African-American theatre should be made by, about, for, and near African-Americans;

Whereas, in 2000, the Schomburg Center held an exhibition, *Lest We Forget: The Triumph Over Slavery*, that was so successful it went on a world tour for over a decade under the sponsorship of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO);

Whereas, in 2016, the Schomburg Center's original and subsequent buildings were designated a National Historic Landmark, recognizing its central place in American history;

Whereas the Schomburg Collection is considered one of the most prestigious African-American and Afro-centric collections in the United States, consisting of over 11,000,000 artifacts, including writings and recordings of Marcus Garvey, Toussaint Louverture, Booker T. Washington, Langston Hughes, Maya Angelou, and Malcolm X; and

Whereas, to this day, the Schomburg Center is committed to meeting the needs of its community, providing educational and public programs year-round and establishing the long-term fellowship program known as Scholars-in-

Residence and the youth educational initiative Junior Scholars Program: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes the 100th anniversary of the
3 founding of the Schomburg Center for Research in
4 Black Culture;

5 (2) commends the critical work it has done in
6 advancing intellectual growth, cultural under-
7 standing, and historical preservation of African and
8 Black culture; and

9 (3) celebrates the lasting and continued impact
10 of the Schomburg Center as a beacon of research,
11 creativity, and community engagement in African-
12 American and African Diaspora studies, and Amer-
13 ican history.

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