

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 1823

A RESOLUTION recognizing the Quindaro Townsite and urging its designation by the National Park Service as a National Heritage Area.

WHEREAS, The Quindaro Townsite represents a uniquely important historical and archeological site in the state of Kansas. Recognized as a national historic site in May of 2002, as well as a Kansas historic site in February of 2002, Quindaro represents a rare combination of Native-American, European-American and African-American culture. The Quindaro site is located on the right side of the Missouri river trench in the northern portion of Kansas City, Kansas, approximately five miles upstream from the conjunction of the Missouri and Kansas rivers. Settled between 1857 and 1862 by European-Americans and Wyandot Indians, the townsite operated as a free-state river port to provide safe passage into Kansas for free-state settlers; and

WHEREAS, The advent of economic depression, drought and the civil war caused Quindaro to be legally and culturally abandoned in 1862. However, following the Civil War and emancipation many Africans who were enslaved fled Missouri and were drawn toward Quindaro because of its antislavery history. By 1865 Quindaro's citizens established Quindaro's first school which later became known as Freeman's University. In 1880 the school was taken over by the African Methodist Episcopal Church which changed its name to Western University. The school adopted the educational model of Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute which focused on vocational and industrial training. Due to the school's success and growth, it became affiliated with the Frederick Douglass Hospital in 1915. During the early 1920's 400-500 students a year attended the school; and

WHEREAS, In 1924 a severe fire destroyed most of the school's dormitories. Furthermore, due to inadequate resources, disputes over administrative issues and accounting problems, the African Methodist Episcopal Church could not replace the facilities and student enrollment dropped. On June 30, 1943, Western University closed. However, the Frederick Douglass Hospital remained open and continued to serve the African-American community until it closed in 1978, an ironic victim of desegregation. The closing of the hospital brought an end to more than 120 years of Quindaro's existence; and

WHEREAS, The history of Quindaro serves as a significant educational and cultural time piece in Kansas history. Founded as a port to further the interests of the antislavery movement, Quindaro's rich history reflects the values of all Kansans: Now, therefore,

*Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas:* That we recognize the important historical significance of the Quindaro Townsite and urge the National Park Service to designate the Quindaro Townsite as a National Heritage Area; and

*Be it further resolved:* That the Secretary of the Senate be directed to send an enrolled copy of this resolution to Senator Haley; Marvin Robinson, 950 Quindaro Blvd., Kansas City, KS 66104; Betty Roberts, 535 Westvale, Kansas City, KS 66102 and to each member of the Kansas congressional delegation.

Senate Resolution No. 1823 was sponsored by Senator David Haley.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the SENATE, and was adopted by that body

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*President of the Senate.*

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*Secretary of the Senate.*