

Senate Resolution No. 1572

**BY:** Senator PARKER

**COMMENDING** Prince Hall upon the occasion of hosting its Black History Month Observance on February 19, 2026

**WHEREAS,** It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and pay tribute to institutions and observances that preserve history, uplift cultural identity, and reaffirm the enduring contributions of African Americans to the moral, civic, and social fabric of the State of New York; and

**WHEREAS,** Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Prince Hall upon the occasion of hosting its Black History Month Observance on Thursday, February 19, 2026, in New York, as a meaningful gathering dedicated to reflection, education, and collective remembrance; and

**WHEREAS,** Prince Hall Freemasonry traces its distinguished origins to March 6, 1775, when Prince Hall and fourteen other free Black men were initiated into Freemasonry by a British military lodge in Boston, laying the foundation for one of the most enduring fraternal institutions committed to liberty, equality, education, and moral uplift; and

**WHEREAS,** In 1784, Prince Hall secured a charter from the Grand Lodge of England for African Lodge No. 459, establishing a sovereign Black Masonic tradition in America that would serve as a vital force for leadership, self-determination, and organized resistance to injustice during slavery, Reconstruction, and the modern civil rights era; and

**WHEREAS,** Throughout its history, Prince Hall Freemasonry has stood at the forefront of community advancement, producing leaders, educators, clergy, entrepreneurs, and civil rights advocates, while quietly supporting the Underground Railroad, mutual aid societies, schools, and civic institutions at times when African Americans were excluded from mainstream systems of power; and

**WHEREAS,** Black History Month observances within Prince Hall Freemasonry serve not only as commemorations of the past, but as living affirmations of the fraternity's core tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth, inspiring future generations to lead with integrity, service, and purpose; and

**WHEREAS,** The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of New York, chartered in 1848, has played a particularly significant role in advancing these principles, standing as one of the oldest and most influential Prince Hall Grand Lodges in the nation, and continuing to shape civic life through faith-based leadership, philanthropy, mentorship, and advocacy; and

**WHEREAS,** The continued strength and relevance of the Prince Hall

tradition in New York is sustained through the dedicated leadership of Most Worshipful Grand Master Darren M. Morton, Ed.D., whose stewardship reflects a deep commitment to historical preservation, principled governance, community engagement, and the cultivation of informed, service-oriented leadership among the Craft; and

**WHEREAS,** Under the guidance of Grand Master Morton, the Grand Lodge has emphasized education, health and wellness, youth mentorship, and civic responsibility, ensuring that Prince Hall Freemasonry remains a vital and forward-looking institution while remaining firmly rooted in its historic mission and values; and

**WHEREAS,** The Prince Hall Black History Month Observance stands as a powerful testament to the enduring relevance of Prince Hall Freemasonry, honoring the legacy of its founders while affirming its ongoing responsibility to uplift communities, strengthen families, and advance justice and equality; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED,** That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Prince Hall upon the occasion of hosting its Black History Month Observance on February 19, 2026, and to recognize its significance in honoring African American history, Masonic heritage, and community leadership; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** That this Legislative Body extend its highest appreciation to the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of New York, and to Most Worshipful Grand Master Darren M. Morton, Ed.D., for their continued leadership, stewardship, and unwavering commitment to faith, service, and the betterment of society; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Most Worshipful Grand Master Darren M. Morton, Ed.D., as a lasting expression of the respect and esteem of this Legislative Body.