

Whereas John Glenn was a pioneer in the realm of space exploration and was selected in 1959 as one of the original 7 astronauts in the United States space program, entering the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Project Mercury;

Whereas John Glenn was assigned to the NASA Space Task Group at Langley Research Center in Hampton, Virginia;

Whereas, in 1962, the Space Task Group was moved to Houston, Texas, and became part of the NASA Manned Spacecraft Center;

Whereas, on February 20, 1962, John Glenn piloted the Mercury-Atlas 6 "Friendship 7" spacecraft on the first manned orbital mission of the United States;

Whereas, after launching from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, John Glenn completed a 3-orbit mission around the planet, reaching an approximate maximum altitude of 162 statute miles and an approximate orbital velocity of 17,500 miles per hour;

Whereas John Glenn landed Friendship 7 approximately 5 hours later, 800 miles southeast of the Kennedy Space Center near Grand Turk Island;

Whereas, with that pioneering flight, John Glenn joined his colleagues Alan Shepard and Virgil Grissom in realizing the dream of space exploration and engaging the minds and imaginations of his and future generations in the vast potential of space exploration;

Whereas, after retiring from the space program, John Glenn continued his public service as a distinguished member of the Senate, in which he served for 24 years;

Whereas John Glenn has continued his public service through his work at the John Glenn Institute at Ohio State University, which was established to foster public involvement in the policy-making process, raise public awareness about key policy issues, and encourage continuous improvement in the management of public enterprise;

Whereas, in March 1999, Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley appointed John Glenn as Chair of the newly formed National Commission on Mathematics and Science Teaching for the 21st Century;

Whereas the Commission played a pivotal role in improving the quality of teaching in mathematics and science in the United States;

Whereas, in 1998, John Glenn returned to space after 36 years as a member of the crew of the space shuttle Discovery, serving as a payload specialist and as a subject for basic research on how weightlessness affects the body of an older person; and

Whereas, combined with his previous missions, John Glenn logged over 218 hours in space: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the 45th anniversary of John Hershel Glenn, Jr.'s landmark mission piloting the first manned orbital mission of the United States; and

(2) recognizes the profound importance of John Glenn's achievement as a catalyst to space exploration and scientific advancement in the United States.

RECOGNIZING THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN SPIRITUAL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 30, S. Res. 69.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 69) recognizing the African-American spiritual as a national treasure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed at the appropriate place in the RECORD as if read, without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 69) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 69

Whereas since slavery was introduced into the European colonies in 1619, enslaved Africans remained in bondage until the United States ratified the 13th amendment to the Constitution in 1865;

Whereas during that period in the history of the United States, the first expression of a unique American music was created by enslaved African-Americans who—

(1) used their knowledge of the English language and the Christian religious faith, as it had been taught to them in the New World; and

(2) stealthily wove within the music their experience of coping with human servitude and their strong desire to be free;

Whereas as a method of survival, enslaved African-Americans who were forbidden to speak their native languages, play musical instruments they had used in Africa, or practice their traditional religious beliefs, relied on their strong African oral tradition of songs, stories, proverbs, and historical accounts to create an original genre of music, now known as spirituals;

Whereas Calvin Earl, a noted performer of, and educator on, African-American spirituals, remarked that the Christian lyrics became a metaphor for freedom from slavery, a secret way for slaves to "communicate with each other, teach their children, record their history, and heal their pain";

Whereas the New Jersey Historical Commission found that "some of those daring and artful runaway slaves who entered New Jersey by way of the Underground Railroad no doubt sang the words of old Negro spirituals like 'Steal Away' before embarking on their perilous journey north";

Whereas African-American spirituals spread all over the United States, and the songs we know of today may represent only a small portion of the total number of spirituals that once existed;

Whereas Frederick Douglass, a fugitive slave who would become one of the leading abolitionists in the United States, remarked that spirituals "told a tale of woe which was then altogether beyond my feeble comprehension; they were tones loud, long, and deep; they breathed the prayer and complaint of souls boiling over with the bitterest anguish. Every tone was a testimony against slavery and a prayer to God for deliverance from chains."; and

Whereas section 2(a)(1) of the American Folklife Preservation Act (20 U.S.C. 2101(a)(1)) states that "the diversity inherent in American folklife has contributed greatly to the cultural richness of the Nation and has fostered a sense of individuality and identity among the American people": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes that African-American spirituals are a poignant and powerful genre of music that have become one of the most significant segments of American music in existence;

(2) expresses the deepest gratitude, recognition, and honor to the former enslaved Africans in the United States for their gifts to the Nation, including their original music and oral history; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to reflect on the important contribution of African-American spirituals to United States history and to recognize the African-American spiritual as a national treasure.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 976

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand that H.R. 976 has been received at the desk from the House, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 976) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax relief for small businesses, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading but object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The bill will receive a second reading on the next legislative day.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO REPORT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding a recess/adjournment of the Senate, committees may report legislative and Executive Calendar business on Thursday, February 22, 2007, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

I would say, Mr. President, that is when the bill the Senate Republican leader and I were talking about will be reported, the homeland security matter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AUTHORITY TO MAKE APPOINTMENTS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the recess or adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President of the Senate pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences, or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro