

12105960D

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 13
AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
(Proposed by the Joint Conference Committee
on March 10, 2012)
(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Marsh)

Recognizing the African American members elected to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and members elected to the Virginia General Assembly during Reconstruction.

WHEREAS, with the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, and with the surrender of General Robert E. Lee on April 9, 1865, marking the end of the American Civil War, tens of thousands of enslaved African men, women, and children were set free from the degradation of human slavery; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the abolition of slavery, the end of the American Civil War resulted in life-altering changes and challenges in former slave states, including extending the right to vote to African American men; and

WHEREAS, after the American Civil War, during the era of Reconstruction between 1865 and 1877, as a condition of readmission into the Union, former slave states were required by Congress to create reconstructed governments, hold state conventions, and establish new constitutions; in Virginia, African American men were given the right to vote for and to be elected delegates to the convention, and African American men were elected to the 1867-1868 Virginia Constitutional Convention, which created the Virginia Constitution of 1869; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Constitution of 1869, the fourth of Virginia's six state constitutions, was also known as the Underwood Constitution, named for Judge John C. Underwood, a federal judge and native New Yorker who served as the Convention's president; and

WHEREAS, according to Virginia Memory, a historical database of the Library of Virginia, "105,832 freedmen registered to vote in Virginia, and 93,145 voted in the election that began on October 22, 1867"; and

WHEREAS, the Underwood Constitution was ratified by popular vote on July 6, 1869; provided for universal suffrage, with the exception of women; established Virginia's first statewide system of public schools; and organized the division of counties into magisterial districts, and these new provisions of state government remained in effect until 1902; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Memory states that, during Reconstruction, "across the South about two thousand African Americans served in local and state government offices, including state legislatures and as members of Congress. About 100 African American men served in the General Assembly of Virginia between 1869 and 1890, and hundreds more in city and county government offices or as postal workers and in other federal jobs"; and

WHEREAS, across the South, legislation known as "Black Codes" was enacted to circumvent and thwart the newfound freedoms of former slaves; the reaction of Congress to these laws was the enactment of the Reconstruction Amendments to the United States Constitution, specifically the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery, the Fourteenth Amendment, which protects the rights of citizenship of freed men and women, and the Fifteenth Amendment, which prohibits states from denying citizens the right to vote due to race, color, or previous condition of servitude; and

WHEREAS, after emancipation, these constitutional amendments laid the foundation by which many former enslaved Africans and their descendants were afforded equal rights as citizens under the United States Constitution, including the right to vote and run for elected public office; and

WHEREAS, although nearly a century would pass before the descendants of slaves would inherit and embrace the reality of the rights embodied in the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, the Reconstruction Amendments helped to transform the United States, according to President Abraham Lincoln, from a country that was "half slave and half free" to one in which the constitutionally guaranteed "blessings of liberty" would be extended to all the nation's citizens; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the resurgence of virulent racial discrimination that followed the Compromise of 1877, which officially brought an end to federal Reconstruction, Southern state governments enacted a system of laws known as "Jim Crow" laws, which established a rigidly segregated and legally sanctioned social system that subjugated and disenfranchised African Americans, again relegating them to second-class citizenship from 1877 until the mid-1960s; and

WHEREAS, during the Jim Crow era, very few African Americans dared to brave the political and social realities of the time to run for public office; from 1890 to 1968, African Americans were not represented in the Virginia General Assembly, the oldest continuous legislative body in the Western Hemisphere; in 1967, William Ferguson Reid, a Richmond doctor and community leader, became the first African American in the 20th century elected to the Virginia House of Delegates; and

SENATE SUBSTITUTE

SJ13S2

60 WHEREAS, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission ("MLK Commission") began the
 61 Virginia African American Legislators Project in 2004; with the generous assistance of former Secretary
 62 of Administration Viola Baskerville, who led the Project, the Library of Virginia, extensive research by
 63 the library and the Commission's legislative staff, and drawing upon *A Register of the General Assembly*
 64 *of Virginia, 1776-1918* and the groundbreaking research of Dr. Eric Foner (*Freedom's Lawmakers: A*
 65 *Directory of Black Officeholders During Reconstruction* (1996)) and of Dr. Luther Porter Jackson
 66 (*Negro Office-Holders in Virginia 1865-1895* (1945)), the Project has established the roll call of African
 67 American men who were elected to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and to the
 68 Virginia House of Delegates and the Senate of Virginia during Reconstruction from 1869 to 1890, as
 69 follows:

70 **Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868**

71 **William H. Andrews**, born around 1839 in Virginia, was a teacher and represented Isle of Wight
 72 and Surry Counties in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and Surry in the Virginia
 73 House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. During his tenure as a member of the Virginia House of
 74 Delegates, he sought legislation to prevent the sale of liquor to minors.

75 **James D. Barrett** was born free in Louisa County in 1833 and later moved to Fluvanna County. A
 76 shoemaker and minister, Mr. Barrett represented Fluvanna in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of
 77 1867-1868. He labored for the welfare of African Americans. Mr. Barrett died in 1903 and is buried on
 78 the grounds of Thessalonica Baptist Church in Fluvanna, which he organized in 1868.

79 **Thomas Bayne**, also known as Samuel Nixon, a dentist and minister, was born a slave in North
 80 Carolina in 1824. In 1865, he was elected to the New Bedford City Council, becoming one of only a
 81 handful of African Americans to hold office in the United States prior to Reconstruction. He was a
 82 member of the delegation of Virginia African Americans who met with President Andrew Johnson in
 83 February 1866 to press demands for civil and political rights; was one of the few African Americans to
 84 testify before the Joint Congressional Committee on Reconstruction; was elected as a vice president of
 85 the Republican state convention in 1867; and was elected from Norfolk to the Virginia Constitutional
 86 Convention of 1867-1868, where he emerged as the most important African American leader and served
 87 on the Committee on the Executive Department of Government and the Committee on Rules and
 88 Regulations. He proposed legislation on school integration and equal citizenship and advanced the
 89 overhaul of the state's tax system. After Reconstruction, Thomas Bayne disappeared from public life. He
 90 died in 1889.

91 **James William D. Bland**, a carpenter, a cooper, and U.S. Tax Assessor, was born free in Farmville
 92 in 1844. He represented Prince Edward County and Appomattox in the Virginia Constitutional
 93 Convention and in the Virginia Senate from 1869 to 1870, where he served on the Senate Committee
 94 for Courts of Justice. At the Virginia Constitutional Convention, Mr. Bland proposed a resolution
 95 requesting military authorities to direct railroad companies to allow convention delegates to occupy
 96 first-class accommodations, which many railroads had refused to do. He also introduced a measure
 97 guaranteeing the right of "every person to enter any college, seminary, or other public institution upon
 98 equal terms with any other, regardless of race, color, or previous condition." He was considered to be
 99 the voice of compromise and impartiality in an age of turmoil and partisanship. James Bland was one of
 100 60 persons killed in 1870 when the second floor of the State Capitol collapsed.

101 **William Breedlove**, a blacksmith, was born free in Essex County around 1820. He represented
 102 Middlesex and Essex Counties in the Virginia Constitutional Convention, where he served on the
 103 Committee on Taxation and Finance. He was the leading spokesperson of his day in Essex County and
 104 served on the Tappahannock Town Council and was a postmaster there from 1870 to 1871. William
 105 Breedlove died sometime before 1880.

106 **John Brown**, a mail carrier, was born a slave in Southampton County in 1826. In 1867, John
 107 Brown, then illiterate, dictated a letter to a local Freedmen's Bureau agent, hoping to reestablish contact
 108 with his wife and two daughters in Mississippi, who had been sold before the Civil War. In addition to
 109 serving in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, he served in the Virginia House of
 110 Delegates and was a member of the House Committee on the Judiciary. He voted regularly with the
 111 Radicals to reform and democratize the Constitution of Virginia to protect the rights of freed people. He
 112 died sometime after June 19, 1900.

113 **David Canada**, a stonemason, represented Halifax County in the Virginia Constitutional Convention
 114 of 1867-1868.

115 **James B. Carter** was born a slave of likely mixed race ancestry in the town of Manchester (South
 116 Richmond) around 1816. A bootmaker and shoemaker, James Carter represented Chesterfield and
 117 Powhatan Counties in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. He introduced a resolution
 118 at the convention directing the General Assembly to pass a law requiring students to attend school at
 119 least three months each year. Mr. Carter did not seek office after the convention. His funeral was held
 120 at African Baptist Church (First Baptist Church) in Richmond in 1870.

121 **Joseph Cox**, native son, was born in 1833. Mr. Cox was a blacksmith who also worked as a

122 bartender, tobacco factory worker, and day laborer, and he operated a small store. In 1867, he was
 123 president of the Union Aid Society, one of Richmond's largest African American organizations, and was
 124 a delegate to the state Republican convention. Mr. Cox represented Richmond in the Virginia
 125 Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. He was vice president of the Richmond meeting of the Colored
 126 National Labor Union in 1870, and two years later he helped lead the successful campaign to elect
 127 African Americans to the city council. He died in Richmond in 1880 and is buried in the Mount Olivet
 128 Cemetery; some three thousand blacks marched in his funeral.

129 **Willis A. Hodges** was born to a well-to-do free Virginia family in 1815. Mr. Hodges was a minister
 130 and farmer who was actively involved in the abolitionist and black suffrage movements in New York.
 131 He was a cofounder of the *Ram's Horn* in 1847, a short-lived African American newspaper. Elected to
 132 the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, Mr. Hodges became a spokesman for the interests
 133 of poor African Americans, urging that public hunting and fishing areas should be set aside since "many
 134 poor people depend on hunting and fishing." He died in the North in 1890 while on a fund-raising trip
 135 for a home for elderly African Americans in Norfolk.

136 **Joseph R. Holmes**, a native of Virginia, was a shoemaker and farmer who represented Charlotte and
 137 Halifax Counties at the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. He ran for a seat in the Senate
 138 of Virginia, but was killed in 1892.

139 **Peter K. Jones**, a native of Petersburg, was born in 1838. He worked as a shoemaker and carpenter.
 140 Mr. Jones was a delegate to the 1865 Virginia Black Convention and represented Greensville and Sussex
 141 Counties at the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. He served in the House of Delegates,
 142 representing Greensville County from 1869 to 1877.

143 **Samuel F. Kelso**, a native of Virginia, was born in 1827 and worked as a teacher. Samuel Kelso
 144 represented Campbell County at the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868.

145 **Lewis Lindsey**, a musician and laborer, was born in Caroline County in 1833. After the war, he
 146 worked in the Tredegar ironworks, was a janitor at the Richmond custom house, and led a brass band.
 147 Mr. Lindsey was employed as a speaker by the Republican Congressional Committee in 1867 and was a
 148 delegate in that year to the Republican state convention from Richmond.

149 **Peter G. Morgan**, born a slave in Nottoway County of African, Indian, and white ancestry in 1817,
 150 was a storekeeper and shoemaker. He represented Petersburg in the Virginia Constitutional Convention
 151 of 1867-1868 and in the House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. He served on the city council from
 152 1872 to 1874 and was a member of the Petersburg school board. Mr. Morgan died in Lawrenceville in
 153 1909.

154 **William P. Mosely**, a native of Virginia, was born in 1819 as a house servant and operated a freight
 155 boat as a slave. He obtained his freedom before the Civil War and became well educated. Mr. Mosely
 156 was a delegate to the Virginia Black Convention of 1865, represented Goochland County in the Virginia
 157 Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, and served in the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1871. He
 158 ran for Congress as a Republican in 1880 but was defeated by the Readjuster candidate.

159 **Francis "Frank" Moss** was a farmer and minister who was born free in 1825 in Buckingham
 160 County. Mr. Moss served in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and the Senate of
 161 Virginia from 1869 to 1871, and also served in the Virginia House of Delegates.

162 **Edward Nelson**, a native of Virginia, represented Charlotte County at the Virginia Constitutional
 163 Convention of 1867-1868.

164 **Daniel M. Norton** was born a slave in Virginia in 1840 and escaped to the North with his brother
 165 Robert around 1850. He learned medicine in Troy, New York, and was licensed as a physician. He
 166 returned to Virginia in 1864 and became one of Hampton's most important political leaders. He was
 167 elected in December 1865 to represent African Americans on a Freedmen's Bureau Court. Early in 1866,
 168 he was sent as a delegate of Hampton area African Americans to testify before the Joint Congressional
 169 Committee on Reconstruction. Daniel Norton represented James City and York Counties in the Virginia
 170 Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and served in the Senate of Virginia from 1871 to 1873 and
 171 from 1877 to 1887. Mr. Norton built an effective political machine in Hampton, and for 40 years he
 172 was a justice of the peace in York County; he was appointed collector of customs in Newport News in
 173 1862 and served on the board of visitors of Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute. He ran
 174 unsuccessfully as an independent candidate for Congress in 1869.

175 **John Robinson**, born in 1822, was a lawyer and graduate of Hampton Institute. He represented
 176 Cumberland County in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and in the Senate of
 177 Virginia from 1869 to 1873. He also worked as a mail carrier and operated a saloon and general store
 178 during the 1870s.

179 **James T.S. Taylor** was born in 1840 in Clarke County and purchased his freedom before the Civil
 180 War. He was educated as a youth, served as a commissary clerk for the Union Army during the Civil
 181 War, and was nominated to represent Albemarle County in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of
 182 1867-1868. Mr. Taylor ran unsuccessfully for the Virginia House of Delegates in 1869.

183 **George Teamoh**, born a slave in Portsmouth in 1818, was a carpenter. An accomplished public
 184 speaker, he was a delegate to the Virginia Black Convention of 1865 and a Union League organizer. He
 185 served in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, but generally remained silent. He wrote
 186 that "agricultural degrees and brickyard diplomas" were poor preparation for the complex proceedings.
 187 However, he did support the disenfranchisement of former Confederates. Mr. Teamoh served in the
 188 Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1871, and, as a member of the Senate, he supported the formation of a
 189 biracial labor union at the Gosport Navy Yard. Later, he was denied re-nomination to the Senate of
 190 Virginia in 1871, due to party factionalism, and ran unsuccessfully for the Virginia House of Delegates.
 191 He was an advocate of African American self-help, was a founder of Portsmouth's first African
 192 American school, and was active in African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) church affairs in the city.

193 **Burwell Toler**, a native of Virginia, represented Hanover and Henrico Counties in the Virginia
 194 Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. A Baptist minister, he organized two churches in Hanover
 195 County and preached at many others.

196 **John Watson** was born in Mecklenburg County and served in the Virginia Constitutional Convention
 197 of 1867-1868 and in the House of Delegates in 1869. Mr. Watson was active in promoting schools and
 198 churches in the county. He died while in office.

199 **Virginia House of Delegates**

200 **William H. Andrews**, born around 1839 in Virginia, was a teacher and represented Isle of Wight
 201 and Surry Counties in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, and Surry in the Virginia
 202 House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. During his tenure as a member of the Virginia House of
 203 Delegates, he supported legislation to prevent the sale of liquor to minors.

204 **William Horace Ash**, born in slavery in 1859 in Loudoun County to William H. and Martha A.
 205 Ash, preferred to call himself Horace Ash of Leesburg. He was educated as a teacher at Hampton
 206 Institute, now called Hampton University, and graduated in 1882, after which he relocated to Nottoway
 207 County, where he taught at a school for African American girls. He served as a county delegate to the
 208 Republican state party convention in 1884; three years later, he was nominated for the Virginia House of
 209 Delegates for the district comprising Amelia and Nottoway Counties. He served in the House of
 210 Delegates from 1887 to 1888 and was a member of the standing Committees on Propositions and
 211 Grievances and on Printing. He studied law and identified himself as a lawyer, but he is not known to
 212 have practiced law; he remained concerned with education. He also taught agriculture at Virginia
 213 Normal and Industrial Institute, later named Virginia State University. Mr. Ash died in 1908.

214 **Briton Baskerville, Jr.**, born a slave in Mecklenburg County in 1863, was the eldest of five sons of
 215 Britton and Sallie Baskerville. He was educated at Boydton Institute and Wayland Seminary in
 216 Washington, D.C., and taught school in the Flat Creek District of Mecklenburg County. He served as the
 217 Sunday school superintendent at Bloom Hill Baptist Church. Mr. Baskerville represented Mecklenburg
 218 County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1887 to 1888, where he served on the House
 219 Committees on Privileges and Elections and the Chesapeake and its Tributaries. He never married and
 220 died early of tuberculosis in 1892.

221 **Edward David Bland** was born a slave in Prince George County in 1848. Edward David Bland, the
 222 son of Frederick Bland, a shoemaker and minister, came to Petersburg following the American Civil
 223 War and attended night school. In 1882 he returned to Prince George County, where he lived with his
 224 family the remainder of his life. He was a teacher, minister, shoemaker, and lighthouse keeper. He
 225 purchased property in City Point. Mr. Bland represented Prince George and Surry in the Virginia House
 226 of Delegates from 1879 to 1884, where he served three terms and was a member of the House
 227 Committees on Executive Expenditures, Schools and Colleges, Agricultural and Mining, Claims,
 228 Retrenchment and Economy, Propositions and Grievances, Enrolled Bills, and Officers and Offices at the
 229 Capitol. Mr. Bland died in 1927 and is interred at the People's Memorial Cemetery in Petersburg.

230 **Phillip S. Bolling**, a farmer and brick mason, was born a slave in Buckingham County around 1849
 231 to Samuel P. and Ellen Munford Bolling. He purchased his mother's and possibly his own and other
 232 relatives' freedom from the prominent Eppes family of Buckingham and Cumberland Counties. His
 233 father owned land in Farmville and Lynchburg, and Phillip Bolling bought the Lynchburg property from
 234 his father in 1872. He worked for his father's brickyard in Farmville, according to the 1880 census. He
 235 became very interested in politics and ran for the Virginia House of Delegates as a Readjuster in 1883.
 236 On election day, Democrats campaigned that Mr. Bolling was a Prince Edward resident and ineligible to
 237 represent Buckingham and Cumberland Counties. Voters ignored the warnings. Winning the election by
 238 538 votes and certified by the local board of elections to represent Buckingham and Cumberland
 239 Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates, he was appointed to the House Committees on Banks,
 240 Currency, and Commerce; on Officers and Offices at the Capitol; and on Rules. However, although he
 241 had been a registered voter in Cumberland County and had voted there from 1881 to 1883, the
 242 Democratic majority on the House Committee on Privileges and Elections successfully challenged his
 243 election on the technicality that he had worked at the Prince Edward brick kiln before the election.
 244 Therefore, the Committee found that he was not a resident of the district from which he had been

245 elected and was ineligible to serve in the Virginia House of Delegates. It is believed that during the
 246 election, due to the similarity in their names, voters confused Phillip S. Bolling with his father, Samuel
 247 P. Bolling, who later won the seat and served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1885 to 1887.
 248 Phillip Bolling was later elected to the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors. He died on April
 249 18, 1892, in Petersburg.

250 **Samuel P. Bolling**, a farmer, bricklayer, and brick manufacturer, and the son of Olive Bolling, was
 251 born into slavery in Cumberland County in 1819. He was trained as a skilled mechanic, and purchased
 252 his freedom shortly before the American Civil War. He also purchased land and started a brickyard,
 253 which employed many individuals who helped construct many of the brick buildings in Farmville. He
 254 eventually amassed more than 1,000 acres in Cumberland County. He agreed with those in the General
 255 Assembly who proposed to scale down the principal and interest to be paid on the antebellum debt in
 256 order to pay for new public schools and other public projects. Mr. Bolling served in the Virginia House
 257 of Delegates, representing Cumberland and Buckingham Counties, from 1885 to 1887. He was a
 258 member of the following House Committees: Claims; Manufactures and Mechanical Arts; and
 259 Retrenchment and Economy. He was active in the Mount Nebo Baptist Church in Buckingham County
 260 as a deacon, trustee, and treasurer. Mr. Bolling died in 1900.

261 **Tazewell Branch** was a shoemaker, storekeeper, and Deputy Collector of Internal Revenue. The son
 262 of Richard Branch and Mary Hays, Tazewell Branch was born a slave in 1828 near the town of
 263 Farmville in Prince Edward County and served as a house servant. He learned to read and write as well
 264 as the skill of shoemaking during slavery. He purchased land and a home, and also purchased land for
 265 what was to become Beulah African Methodist Episcopal Church. He married and raised a family. His
 266 children included Clement Tazewell Branch, who received his M.D. degree from Howard in 1900 and
 267 settled in Camden, New Jersey, to become the first African American to serve on the city's school
 268 board, and Mary Elizabeth Branch, who attended Virginia State University and taught there for 20 years.
 269 Branch Hall is named in her honor. In 1930, she became president of Tillotson College in Austin,
 270 Texas. Tazewell Branch refused pay for service in party campaigns and quit politics when he observed
 271 politicians becoming corrupt. He represented Prince Edward County in the Virginia House of Delegates
 272 from 1874 to 1877. He died in New Jersey on April 30, 1925, and was buried in the Odd Fellows
 273 Cemetery in Farmville.

274 **William H. Brisby** was born free in New Kent County in 1836 to Roger Lewis, an African
 275 American, and Miranda Brisby, a Pamunkey Indian. He taught himself to read and write and learned
 276 blacksmithing as a trade. Mr. Brisby worked as a blacksmith, farmer, and lawyer. He worked on the
 277 construction of the Richmond and York River Railroad. He was a landowner and his chief interests were
 278 the study and practice of law. William H. Brisby represented New Kent County in the Virginia House of
 279 Delegates from 1869 to 1871, serving on the Officers and Offices at the Capitol Committee. He later
 280 served on the New Kent Board of Supervisors from 1880 to 1882 and was a justice of the peace from
 281 1870 until 1910. Mr. Brisby claimed to have helped Union prisoners of war escape from Richmond
 282 during the American Civil War, stowing them away in his cargo transports. Mr. Brisby died in 1916.

283 **Goodman Brown** was born free in Surry County in 1840, a member of three generations of free
 284 men. His father was a landowner and at the age of 19, Goodman Brown enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a
 285 cabin boy aboard the USS *Maratanza* during the American Civil War. He was discharged December 20,
 286 1864. A farmer, he attended night school and was later instructed by his wife, one of the first African
 287 American school teachers in Surry County. He represented Prince George and Surry Counties in the
 288 Virginia House of Delegates from 1887 to 1888, where he served on the House Immigration and the
 289 Retrenchment and Economy Committees. He died July 4, 1929, in Surry County and is buried near
 290 Bacon's Castle.

291 **Peter Jacob Carter**, the son of Jacob and Peggie Carter, was born in 1845 in the town of Eastville
 292 in Northampton County. His occupations included farmer, storekeeper, lighthouse keeper, and oysterman.
 293 He worked as a house servant while in slavery; however, he ran away during the American Civil War
 294 and enlisted on October 30, 1863, in Company B of the 10th Regiment United States Colored Infantry.
 295 He mustered out on May 17, 1866. After the war, Carter was educated at Hampton Institute, now
 296 Hampton University. He became an important figure in Republican politics on Virginia's Eastern Shore
 297 and served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1878, one of the longest tenures among the
 298 19th century African American members of the General Assembly. He introduced measures concerning
 299 taxes on oysters, the boundaries of election precincts, correcting prisoner abuse, and improving the care
 300 and housing of elderly and disabled African American people. A large landowner, he also introduced
 301 bills to combat the exclusion of African Americans from jury service and to improve the treatment of
 302 prisoners and abolish the whipping post as a punishment for crime. He was in the delegation from the
 303 General Assembly that met with President Grant to support the Civil Rights Act of 1875. He served on
 304 the following House Committees: Asylums and Prisons, Agriculture and Mining, Retrenchment and
 305 Economy, Claims, and Militia and Police. Later, Mr. Carter was a doorkeeper of the Senate of Virginia

306 from 1881 to 1882. He was appointed by the General Assembly to the Board of Visitors of Virginia
307 State College, now Virginia State University. His son Peter J. Carter, Jr., studied medicine at Howard
308 University and became a physician at the Veterans Hospital in Tuskegee, Alabama. Peter Jacob Carter
309 died in 1886.

310 **Matt Clark**, a farmer, was born a slave in 1844 to Matt and Chaney Clarke. He became a
311 landowner in Halifax County. In the General Assembly, he often signed his name simply "Matt Clark,"
312 without the "e." He represented Halifax County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1874 to 1875
313 and served on the House Committee on Asylums and Prisons. He introduced a resolution supporting the
314 improvement of living conditions at the Central Lunatic Asylum in Petersburg and agreed to the
315 refinancing of the state war debt at a lower interest rate or repudiating a portion of the debt and using
316 the remaining revenue to support the new public school system and other public programs.

317 **George William Cole**, a teacher and farmer, was born free in Athens, Georgia, in the late 1840s to
318 William and Martha Cole. Inspired by his parents and perhaps by Emancipation and Reconstruction, he
319 developed a desire for education and self-improvement. He entered Hampton Normal and Agricultural
320 Institute, now Hampton University, in 1872. By 1879, Mr. Cole had made his way to Essex County,
321 was married with a daughter, and emerged as the Republican candidate for the county seat in the
322 Virginia House of Delegates. He won election to the House seat to represent Essex County from 1879 to
323 1880. On December 3, 1879, Mr. Cole joined 15 other Republicans, of whom 10 were African
324 Americans, to form a wedge between an equal number of Republican Funders and Republican
325 Readjusters that resulted in a new slate of House leaders, among them a few African American office
326 holders, to replace Confederate veterans in insignificant functions. Mr. Cole served as a member of the
327 House Committee on Labor and the Poor. During his tenure, he did not introduce legislation; however,
328 he supported a measure that would lower taxes on malt liquor, spirits, and wine vendors and supported
329 the constitutional amendment to repeal the poll tax. Little is known about Mr. Cole after his term in the
330 Virginia General Assembly. The date of his death is unknown.

331 **Asa Coleman** was born a slave in North Carolina in the early 1830s to Matthew and Frances
332 Coleman and moved to Halifax County about 1868. Before the American Civil War, he lived in
333 Louisiana. He had a limited education, but he was well versed in politics. Mr. Coleman purchased 150
334 acres of land in 1875 with money he earned as a legislator. He represented Halifax County in the
335 Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1873, serving three sessions. He was a member of the House
336 Committee on Asylums and Prisons and was with the General Assembly delegation that met with
337 President Grant to support the Civil Rights Act of 1875. A farmer and carpenter, Mr. Coleman is
338 believed to have died sometime after February 24, 1893.

339 **Johnson Collins**, a native of Virginia, was born in slavery in August 1847. In 1870, he lived with
340 his family in Brunswick County and earned his living as a laborer. In November 1879, he won a
341 three-way race for a seat in the Virginia House of Delegates, representing Brunswick County from 1879
342 to 1880. He served as a member of the House Committees on Federal Relations and Resolutions and on
343 Public Property. He supported legislation to eliminate the poll tax, reduce the tax on malt, liquor, spirits,
344 and wine vendors, and reduce the principal of the public debt and refinance the interest. After his
345 service in the Virginia General Assembly, Mr. Collins relocated to Washington, D.C., with his family,
346 where he worked as a watchman for 20 years. Mr. Collins died on November 3, 1906, and is buried in
347 Columbian Harmony Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

348 **Aaron Commodore** was born between 1819 and 1824 as a slave in Essex County. A shoemaker, he
349 purchased a home and land in Tappahannock three years before he became a member of the General
350 Assembly. He was an influential community leader and represented Essex County in the Virginia House
351 of Delegates from 1875 to 1877, where he served on the House Militia and Police Committee. He was a
352 member of First Baptist Church, Tappahannock. Mr. Commodore died in June 1892.

353 **Miles Connor** was a farmer and minister born a slave in Norfolk County in 1832 to parents Richard
354 and Matilda Connor. He served as a valet and house servant. He was educated and could read and write.
355 After emancipation, Mr. Connor emerged as a leader among the freedmen of Norfolk County, assisting
356 in the organizing of schools, churches, and fraternal societies. He represented Norfolk County in the
357 Virginia House of Delegates from 1875 to 1877, serving on the House Militia and Police Committee.
358 After leaving the General Assembly, he served as a justice of the peace from 1887 to 1889 in Norfolk
359 County. His son Miles Washington Connor became the first president of Coppin State Teachers College
360 (later Coppin State University) in Baltimore, Maryland. Miles Connor was buried at Churchland in June
361 1893.

362 **Henry Cox** was born free in Powhatan County in 1832. A shoemaker, he became a landowner early,
363 purchasing 37 acres in 1871. He represented Chesterfield and Powhatan Counties in the Virginia House
364 of Delegates from 1869 to 1877, serving on the House Officers and Offices at the Capitol Committee.
365 Mr. Cox was with the delegation that met with President Grant to get his support for the Civil Rights
366 Act. Mr. Cox died sometime after 1910.

367 **Isaac Dabbs**, a farmer and minister, was born a slave in 1846 in Charlotte County to George and

368 Frankie Dabbs. He had a limited education. He represented Charlotte County in the Virginia House of
369 Delegates from 1875 to 1877.

370 **McDowell Delaney** was a bricklayer, teacher, minister, and mason. He was born free in Amelia
371 County in 1844 to parents Edmund and Sally Hughes Delaney. His father was a miller and teacher. Mr.
372 Delaney attended the school in which his father taught and he later became a teacher and pastor for
373 several churches and organized a Baptist Association. Mr. Delaney represented Amelia County in the
374 Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1873. He died in 1929.

375 **Amos A. Dodson** was born a slave in Mecklenburg County in 1856. He worked as a farmer, Deputy
376 Collector of Internal Revenue, teacher, and newspaper editor. The son of a blacksmith, Mr. Dodson
377 attended school. He was a born orator and was active in politics. He moved to Knoxville, Tennessee,
378 and edited a newspaper there. He represented Mecklenburg County in the Virginia House of Delegates
379 from 1883 to 1884.

380 **Shed Dungee** was born free in 1831 to Cumberland County parents who had been free for several
381 generations. Mr. Dungee earned a living as a shoemaker, farmer, and licensed preacher. He learned the
382 trade of shoemaking and attended night school after the American Civil War. He owned and operated a
383 small farm and promoted the development of schools and the founding of churches. He represented
384 Cumberland and Buckingham Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1879 to 1882. He died
385 in 1900.

386 **Jesse Dungey** was born free in 1812 in King William County to Joseph and Betsy Collins Dungey
387 of African American, white, and Native American ancestry. A shoemaker and minister, Mr. Dungey
388 derived his income from making shoes as well as leeching, a custom of the day. He owned land and,
389 after the American Civil War, he founded and pastored several churches. He abandoned the Republican
390 Party when it nominated a former congressman for mayor of Richmond who had voted against the Civil
391 Rights Act of 1875. As a result, Mr. Dungey was driven from his pulpit by irate parishioners. He
392 represented King William County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1873 and served as
393 justice of the peace for the county.

394 **Isaac Edmundson**, a property owner with little education, was born in 1846. Mr. Edmundson
395 represented Halifax County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871.

396 **Ballard T. Edwards**, a bricklayer, plasterer, and contractor, was born free in Manchester, Virginia,
397 in 1829 of black, white, and Native American ancestry. His mother was a teacher, and he also taught at
398 a night school for freedmen after the American Civil War. He was a delegate to the 1865 Virginia Black
399 Convention, and during Reconstruction he held office as overseer of the poor, justice of the peace, and
400 assistant postmaster at Manchester. He represented Chesterfield and Powhatan Counties in the Virginia
401 House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871, where he proposed a measure banning racial discrimination by
402 railroad and steamboat companies. A leader in the Manchester First Baptist Church, Mr. Edwards was
403 also active in the Masons. He died in 1881.

404 **Joseph P. Evans** was born a slave in 1835 in Dinwiddie County and purchased his freedom in 1859.
405 During Reconstruction, he was a prominent leader of Petersburg's African American community, serving
406 as a delegate to the Republican state convention of 1867, and in the Virginia House of Delegates from
407 1871 to 1873, representing Petersburg. Mr. Evans also served in the Senate of Virginia from 1874 to
408 1875. While a member of the General Assembly, Mr. Evans introduced bills to require compulsory
409 education, guarantee African Americans the right to serve on juries, and require landlords to give ten
410 days' notice before evicting a tenant. He also held positions as a letter carrier and as deputy collector of
411 internal revenue. He was elected president of a Black labor convention in Richmond in 1875, where he
412 urged African Americans to organize themselves independently in politics and as workers. He ran
413 unsuccessfully as an independent candidate for Congress in 1884. His son, William Evans, represented
414 Petersburg in the General Assembly from 1887 to 1888. Joseph P. Evans died in 1888.

415 **William D. Evans** was born free in Farmville in 1831 to a family that had been free since before
416 1800. Mr. Evans earned a living as a painter, grocer, and contractor. He was a relative of James W.D.
417 Bland, the senator who represented Prince Edward County. He learned the trade of painting and
418 paperhanging as an apprentice to a master before the American Civil War. After learning to read and
419 write in night school, he became interested in politics. Following in the footsteps of his uncle, Dennis
420 Evans, a landowner in Prince Edward County before the war, William Evans purchased property in
421 Farmville. He received contracts for the interior decoration of buildings in Washington, D.C. and
422 elsewhere. William D. Evans represented Prince Edward County in the Virginia House of Delegates
423 from 1877 to 1880. He died in 1900.

424 **William W. Evans** was born a slave in 1860 in Dinwiddie County. The son of Joseph P. and
425 Josephine Evans, William Evans began his working career as a barber, but ended as a self-made lawyer.
426 He attended school in Petersburg and purchased real estate. He represented Petersburg in the Virginia
427 House of Delegates from 1887 to 1888.

428 **William Faulcon** was a blacksmith and merchant who operated a blacksmith shop and a store at

429 Surry Court House. He purchased land and represented Prince George and Surry Counties in the
430 Virginia House of Delegates from 1885 to 1887.

431 **George Fayerman**, a storekeeper, was born free in Louisiana in 1830 to George and Phoebe
432 Fayerman. His father fled from Haiti to Louisiana during the slave insurrection led by Touissant
433 l'Overture. Mr. Fayerman was literate in both French and English. After the American Civil War, he
434 came to Petersburg where he established a grocery store and became an official of the Union League
435 and a delegate to the 1867 state Republican convention. Mr. Fayerman served in the Virginia House of
436 Delegates from 1869 to 1871, where he sponsored civil rights legislation. He served as overseer of the
437 poor from 1872 to 1874, and as a member of the Petersburg City Council from 1874 to 1876. He died
438 in 1891.

439 **James A. Fields** was born a slave in Hanover County in 1844. He was the son of a shoemaker and
440 became a teacher and lawyer. As a young man, he served as caretaker of the horses used by lawyers
441 attending court at the Hanover Court House, and he spent considerable time in court observing the
442 proceedings, which very likely inspired him to become a lawyer and a commonwealth's attorney. James
443 Fields and his brother George became refugees during the American Civil War. He graduated from
444 Hampton Institute, now Hampton University, shortly after the war in 1871 as a member of the
445 institution's first graduating class. He also attended Howard University, graduating in 1881. Mr. Fields
446 taught school before and after law school, and was later elected doorkeeper of the Virginia House of
447 Delegates from 1879 to 1880. He was eminently successful as a lawyer, as was his brother, George. Mr.
448 Fields represented Elizabeth City and James City in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1889 to 1890.
449 He died in 1903.

450 **Alexander Q. Franklin**, the son of Benjamin and Martha Franklin, was born in 1851 in Henrico
451 County. His father was born a slave but purchased his freedom from income earned as a brick mason.
452 Alexander Franklin was educated and was the first African American to teach in Charles City County,
453 where he taught two years. He taught 36 years in Powhatan County. He purchased land and devoted his
454 life to leadership, schools, and church. He represented Charles City County in the Virginia House of
455 Delegates from 1889 to 1890, and also served as the commissioner of revenue. Alexander Franklin died
456 in 1923.

457 **William Gilliam** was born free in 1841 in Prince George County of African, white, and Native
458 American ancestry. He owned his own farm. Mr. Gilliam served in the Virginia House of Delegates
459 from 1871 to 1875, where he sought to prohibit discrimination in railroad and steamboat travel. He gave
460 an eloquent speech in 1873 against the use of the whipping post as a punishment for crime. Mr. Gilliam
461 died in New York City in 1893.

462 **James P. Goodwyn** was born in Petersburg and married there during the American Civil War. He
463 represented Petersburg in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1874 to 1875.

464 **Armistead Green**, a grocer and mortician, was born a slave in 1841 in Petersburg. His parents were
465 Amos and Gracie Green. He was one of several prosperous African American grocers in the area. He
466 purchased land in Petersburg before his election to the Virginia General Assembly, where he represented
467 Petersburg in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1881 to 1884. For a number of years he served as a
468 deacon in the First Baptist Church in Petersburg. Mr. Green died in 1893.

469 **Robert G. Griffin** represented James City and York in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1883
470 to 1884.

471 **Nathaniel M. Griggs** was born a slave in 1857 in Farmville to Matthew and Nicy Washington. He
472 attended night school and was a tobacco factory worker but was soon discharged for making political
473 speeches. He entered politics and was appointed deputy collector of internal revenue. He represented
474 Prince Edward County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1883 to 1884. Later, he was employed
475 by the Bureau of Printing and Engraving in Washington, D.C. After the failure of the Republican Party
476 to win reelection in the presidential election of 1892, Mr. Griggs went to work as a jeweler for the
477 Wanamaker Company in Philadelphia. He died in 1919.

478 **Ross Hamilton** was born a slave in Mecklenburg County in 1838 or 1839. He earned a living as a
479 carpenter and storekeeper. He served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1882, and from
480 1889 to 1890. Mr. Hamilton was considered one of the legislature's "parliamentary authorities." He spent
481 the last part of his life working for the federal government in Washington, D.C., where he died. He
482 married twice and is buried on the grounds of Boydton Institute.

483 **Alfred W. Harris**, a lawyer and the son of Henry Harris, was born free in Fairfax County in 1854.
484 The family traced ancestors back to those living in Fairfax County in 1776. He attended the public
485 schools in Alexandria, studied law privately with African American attorney George W. Mitchell, and
486 enrolled in and graduated from Howard University in 1881. He began the practice of law in Petersburg
487 in 1882. Alfred Harris owned 12.5 acres of land in Dinwiddie County. He was regarded as one of the
488 ablest debaters in the General Assembly. He represented Petersburg in the Virginia House of Delegates
489 from 1881 to 1888 and served on the City Council of Alexandria. Mr. Harris died in 1920.

490 **H. Clay Harris** was not a native of Virginia, and the date of his birth is unknown. He came to

491 Halifax County from Ohio shortly after the American Civil War and took an active role in politics. He
 492 was well educated and purchased 24 acres of land in Halifax County. He represented Halifax County in
 493 the Virginia House of Delegates from 1874 to 1875.

494 **Henry C. Hill** was born a free man in Amelia County, the son of Henry Hill. The date of his birth
 495 is unknown. He represented Amelia County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1874 to 1875, and
 496 was a justice of the peace in Amelia County. Mr. Hill became a landowner after his term in office.

497 **Charles E. Hodges** was born in 1819 to well-to-do African American Virginians. His family moved
 498 to Brooklyn, New York, in the 1830s after his brother William was accused of forging free papers for
 499 slaves, leading to the persecution of his father. Charles Hodges was a minister. He became involved in
 500 the abolition movement and the struggle for African American suffrage in New York State and was a
 501 delegate to the National Black Convention in Philadelphia in 1855. Returning to Virginia after the
 502 American Civil War, he served in the Virginia House of Delegates, representing Norfolk County from
 503 1869 to 1871. He failed to win reelection after his term. Three of his brothers were also involved in
 504 Reconstruction politics. Charles Hodges died in 1910.

505 **John Q. Hodges**, the brother of office holders Charles, William, and Willis Hodges, was born to a
 506 prosperous Virginia free African American family that was forced to leave the state for Brooklyn, New
 507 York, in the 1830s after his brother was accused of aiding fugitive slaves. The date of his birth is
 508 unknown. John Hodges represented Princess Anne County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869
 509 to 1871, but failed to win reelection.

510 **Henry Johnson** was born a slave in Amelia County in 1842. His parents were David and Louisa
 511 Johnson. During slavery, he was taught to read by a white man to whom he gave food in exchange for
 512 his lessons. After slavery, he continued his informal education at the home of James Ferguson, a
 513 Richmond native who was the first African American school teacher in Princess Anne County. Mr.
 514 Johnson was a shoemaker and teacher. He purchased land in Princess Anne County shortly after
 515 Emancipation. He represented Nottoway and Amelia Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from
 516 1889 to 1890. He died in 1922.

517 **Benjamin Jones**, a farm manager, was born in 1834 or 1835. The slave overseer on his master's
 518 plantation before the American Civil War, Mr. Jones was sent to the North for education in 1865 by his
 519 former owner and was given 35 acres of land. He represented Charles City County in the Virginia
 520 House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871, where he introduced legislation to make gambling a felony.
 521 According to the U.S. Census in 1870, he owned \$600 in real estate. Benjamin Jones died in 1880.

522 **James R. Jones** was a storekeeper and postmaster. His date of birth and death are unknown. Mr.
 523 Jones served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1885 to 1887, representing Mecklenburg County.
 524 He also served in the Senate of Virginia from 1875 to 1877 and from 1881 to 1883.

525 **Peter K. Jones**, a native of Petersburg, was born in 1838. He worked as a shoemaker and carpenter.
 526 Mr. Jones was a delegate to the 1865 Virginia Black Convention and represented Greenville and Sussex
 527 Counties at the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. He served in the Virginia House of
 528 Delegates, representing Greensville County from 1869 to 1877.

529 **Robert G. W. Jones**, farmer, mail carrier, and music teacher, was born free in 1827 in Henrico
 530 County. He moved to Charles City County before 1860, where he acquired considerable landholdings. In
 531 1865, he purchased 500 acres for \$900. In 1870, he bought 70 acres for \$179, and finally, in 1826, he
 532 purchased 31 acres for \$300. He organized the first music classes in Charles City County and
 533 represented the county in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. It is believed that Mr.
 534 Jones died in 1900.

535 **Rufus S. Jones**, a storekeeper, was born free in 1835 in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, to William and
 536 Louisa Jones. He came to Warwick County at the end of the American Civil War. In the U.S. Census in
 537 1870, Mr. Jones was listed as a teacher who owned no property, but he subsequently became a grocer,
 538 purchased a lot in Hampton in 1871, and engaged in a number of real estate transactions. He represented
 539 Elizabeth City and Warwick Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1875.

540 **William H. Jordan** was born a slave in 1860 in Petersburg, the son of Armistead Jordan, a
 541 contractor. Mr. Jordan received some education and earned a living as a barber, lawyer, and railway
 542 mail carrier. In 1884, before entering the General Assembly, he bought a house and lot in Petersburg but
 543 spent the later part of his life in the North. He represented Petersburg in the Virginia House of
 544 Delegates from 1885 to 1887 and also served on the Petersburg City Council.

545 **Alexander G. Lee** was born a slave in Portsmouth, the son of Richard B. and Lyndia Ann Butler.
 546 The date of his birth is not known. He attended schools in Portsmouth and later moved to Hampton. He
 547 was a lighthouse keeper and boatman. He engaged in several real estate transactions during his career in
 548 Portsmouth. His son, Alexander G. Lee, Jr., was born in 1871, and was alive in 1946 when Dr. Luther
 549 Porter Jackson's book, *Negro Office-Holders in Virginia 1865-1895* (1945), was published.

550 **Neverson Lewis**, a farmer, was born a slave in Powhatan County. The date of his birth is unknown.
 551 Although Mr. Lewis had little education, he had a reputation for common sense and honesty in politics.

552 He represented Chesterfield and Powhatan Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1879 to
553 1882.

554 **James F. Lipscomb**, a farmer and merchant, was born free in Cumberland County in 1830 to a
555 family whose freedom was first granted in 1818. Although he was born in poverty, he learned to read
556 and write and rose by his own efforts from the position of a hack driver in Richmond to the owner of a
557 canal boat on the James River, and finally to the ownership of three farms in Cumberland totaling 510
558 acres. He built a 12-room house and eight smaller dwellings, which he rented out to his farm tenants.
559 After ending his eight-year career in the General Assembly, Mr. Lipscomb opened a general country
560 store, which was later operated by his grandson. He represented Cumberland County in the Virginia
561 House of Delegates from 1869 to 1877. Mr. Lipscomb died in 1893.

562 **William P. Lucas**, who was born free in Prince William County in 1843, the son of Jerry and Fanny
563 Lucas, was a teacher and postal clerk. In 1874, he purchased 68 acres of land in Louisa County for
564 \$350. Before his election to the General Assembly, he taught school. Mr. Lucas represented Louisa
565 County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1874 to 1875.

566 **John W. B. Matthews** was born in 1840 to a prosperous free African American family, and was
567 educated in Petersburg. His grandmother, mother, and Matthews owned slaves before the American Civil
568 War. He served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1873, representing Petersburg. He also
569 served as a deputy customs collector. After Reconstruction, he moved to Massachusetts.

570 **J. B. Miller, Jr.**, a teacher, was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1869 as a Radical
571 Republican to represent Goochland County from 1869 to 1871. Little is known about Mr. Miller's life.

572 **Peter G. Morgan**, born a slave of African, Native American, and white ancestry in 1817, in
573 Nottoway County, was a storekeeper and shoemaker. He represented Petersburg in the Virginia
574 Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. He
575 served on the Petersburg City Council from 1872 to 1874 and was a member of the Petersburg School
576 Board. Mr. Morgan died in Lawrenceville in 1909.

577 **Francis "Frank" Moss** was a farmer and minister who was born free in 1825 in Buckingham
578 County. Mr. Moss served in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, served in the Virginia
579 House of Delegates, representing Buckingham County from 1874 to 1875, and also served in the Senate
580 of Virginia from 1869 to 1871.

581 **Armistead Nickens**, a miller and farmer, was born free in 1836 in Lancaster County, the son of
582 Armistead and Polly Nickens. His Virginia ancestry extended back to the 17th century. Eight of his
583 ancestors fought in the American Revolution. His father taught him to read and write. Before his 1870
584 election to the General Assembly, he purchased 135 acres of land in Lancaster County, and in 1876, he
585 built and gave to the county the first school for African American children. He represented Lancaster
586 County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1875. Mr. Nickens died in 1907.

587 **Frederick S. Norton**, a shoemaker, was the brother of Virginia legislators Robert Norton and Daniel
588 M. Norton. The dates of his birth and death are unknown. Mr. Norton represented James City County
589 and Williamsburg in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871.

590 **Robert Norton** was born a slave in Virginia. The date of his birth and death are unknown. Robert
591 Norton and his brother Daniel ran away to the North around 1850. He returned to Virginia in 1864,
592 established himself as the leading African American merchant in Yorktown, and served in the Virginia
593 House of Delegates from 1869 to 1872 and from 1881 to 1882, representing Elizabeth City and York
594 County. He ran unsuccessfully as an independent candidate for U.S. Congress in 1874.

595 **Alexander Owen**, a slave, was a rock mason who was born in 1830 or 1831 to Patrick and Lucy
596 Hughes Owen. Mr. Owen represented Halifax County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to
597 1871. He did not own property according to the U.S. Census of 1870, but used his legislative salary to
598 purchase 54 acres of land.

599 **Littleton Owens**, a farmer and the son of John W. and Meheatable Cuffee Owens, was born free in
600 1842 in Princess Anne County. The date of his birth is unknown. He taught himself to read and write.
601 Mr. Owens served three years in the American Civil War and owned a farm of 75 acres in the
602 Kempsville district. Mr. Owens represented Princess Anne County in the Virginia House of Delegates
603 from 1879 to 1882. He died in 1894.

604 **Richard G. L. Paige**, a lawyer and assistant postmaster, was born a slave in Norfolk and was reared
605 by a free African American woman. According to the report of his descendants, Mr. Paige was the son
606 of a white woman of high social standing. He was sent away to Boston where he was trained as a
607 machinist. After the American Civil War, he returned to Virginia and studied law at Howard University,
608 where he graduated in 1879. He acquired extensive holdings in real estate, and opened a law practice in
609 which he represented both African American and white clients. He represented Norfolk County in the
610 Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1875 and from 1879 to 1882. Mr. Paige died in 1904.

611 **William H. Patterson**, a minister by profession, was born in 1809 or 1810 to a New Kent County
612 family that had been free landowners for several generations. According to the U.S. Census in 1870, he
613 owned \$1,000 in real estate and \$200 in personal property. Mr. Patterson represented Charles City

614 County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1873.

615 **Ceasar Perkins** was born a slave in 1839 in Buckingham County, the son of Joseph and Clarey
616 Mosely. He adopted the name "Perkins" from the name of his last master. Ceasar Perkins, a brick
617 mason, farmer, storekeeper, and minister, was self-educated. He made bricks on his farm, built homes,
618 promoted education, and organized churches, serving as pastor for them. He also entered politics and
619 represented Buckingham County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871 and from 1887
620 to 1888. Although from 1890 to 1903, he lived in Clifton Forge, and from 1903 to 1910, he resided in
621 Richmond, he spent the greater part of his life in Buckingham County. Mr. Perkins died in 1910 and is
622 buried in Buckingham County on land he purchased in 1906.

623 **Fountain M. Perkins** was born in 1816. He was a minister and farmer. As a Virginia slave, Perkins
624 was educated by his owner's wife and worked as a plantation overseer. He attended a school run by a
625 Northern teacher after the American Civil War. Mr. Perkins organized Baptist churches in Louisa
626 County, was a landowner during Reconstruction, and served in the Virginia House of Delegates from
627 1869 to 1871. Mr. Perkins died in 1896.

628 **John W. Poindexter**, a teacher, was born free in Louisa County. He received his education at
629 Howard University, where he graduated in 1872. He became the first African American school teacher
630 in Louisa County. Although he never married, he purchased property in the county and represented
631 Louisa in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1875 to 1877. Mr. Poindexter died in 1903.

632 **Joseph B. Pope** was elected as a Republican Readjuster to a single term in the Virginia House of
633 Delegates, representing Southampton County from 1879 to 1880. He was recognized as a "pioneering
634 African American." Little is known about Mr. Pope's life.

635 **Guy Powell**, a minister, was born a slave in 1851 in Brunswick County, the son of Milton and
636 Pythana Powell. He was educated at Wayland Seminary in Washington, D.C. He became a property
637 owner and, in 1879, he and his brother bought 217 acres. In 1881, he bought the half-interest in the
638 land from his brother. Mr. Powell represented Brunswick County in the Virginia House of Delegates
639 from 1881 to 1882. For a number of years he served as the pastor of a Baptist church in Brunswick
640 County and spent the last years of his life in Franklin. The date of his death is unknown.

641 **William H. Ragsdale**, the son of R. Edward and Fannie Ragsdale, was born a slave in 1844. He
642 became a teacher. He purchased 122 acres of land in Charlotte County in 1871 for \$1,400. Mr. Ragsdale
643 represented Charlotte County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871.

644 **John H. Robinson**, a teacher and lawyer, was born a slave in 1857 in Gloucester County, the son of
645 Edward and Cordelia Robinson. He attended Hampton Institute, now Hampton University, and graduated
646 in 1876. He owned his home in Hampton and purchased additional property in Elizabeth City County.
647 He was active in his church, Queen Street Baptist Church of Hampton, as deacon and clerk. He
648 represented Elizabeth City County, James City County, and York County in the Virginia House of
649 Delegates from 1887 to 1888. Mr. Robinson died in 1932.

650 **R. D. Ruffin**, a lawyer, was born a slave in 1837 in King and Queen County. Mr. Ruffin fought in
651 the American Civil War and became a sergeant. He studied law at Howard University and graduated in
652 1874. After graduation, he first settled in Alexandria, but later moved to Dinwiddie County to practice
653 law and enter politics. He represented Dinwiddie County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1875
654 to 1876 and served as the sheriff of Alexandria County from 1873 to 1874. The date of Mr. Ruffin's
655 death is unknown.

656 **Archer Scott** was a farmer who had a limited education. Mr. Scott purchased property and was very
657 engaged in the affairs of his community. He represented Nottoway and Amelia Counties in the Virginia
658 House of Delegates from 1875 to 1877 and from 1879 to 1884. The date of Mr. Scott's birth is
659 unknown; he died in 1908.

660 **George L. Seaton** was a contractor and grocer. He was born free in 1826 in Alexandria to George
661 and Lucinda Seaton. His father was a carpenter, and he taught the trade to his sons, George and John.
662 The Seatons were successful business owners. George Seaton represented Alexandria in the Virginia
663 House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. Mr. Seaton died in 1882.

664 **Dabney Smith**, born a slave in Charlotte County in 1846, was the son of William Henry and
665 Francina Smith. A house servant with some education, he earned a living as a merchant, farmer, and
666 mail carrier and purchased 194 acres of land in Charlotte County. He was deeply involved in politics
667 and held office in the Republican Party organization, representing Charlotte County. He represented
668 Charlotte County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1881 to 1882. He died in 1920.

669 **Henry D. Smith**, a farmer and distiller, was born a slave in Greenville County in 1834. He was
670 self-educated. He amassed an estate of 965 acres and purchased "Merry Oaks," the farm and residence
671 of his former owner. He supplemented his income from his farm by manufacturing brandy and whiskey
672 in his distillery. He married three times and was the father of seventeen or more children. He
673 represented Greenville County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1879 to 1880. Mr. Smith died
674 in 1901.

675 **Robert M. Smith**, born free in New Kent County, was a blacksmith, merchant, and collector of
 676 customs. Robert Smith was a war refugee with other members of his family in 1864 in the town of
 677 Hampton. He attended night school with hundreds of other freedmen quartered there. He learned the
 678 trade of blacksmithing. Establishing his home in Hampton, Mr. Smith first operated a blacksmith shop
 679 with his brother and later opened a grocery store and was appointed collector of customs at Old Point
 680 Comfort. He served his community for over 40 years; he was deacon of his church and served in several
 681 state and national offices in fraternal orders. He represented Elizabeth City and Warwick in the Virginia
 682 House of Delegates from 1875 to 1877. He also served as Commissioner of the Revenue from 1883 to
 683 1889 for Elizabeth City and was a member of the Hampton City Council from 1895 to 1899. Mr. Smith
 684 died in 1925.

685 **John B. Syphax** was born free in Alexandria County (Arlington) in 1835 on the Parke Custis estate.
 686 He was the son of Charles and Maria Custis Syphax. His parents, once enslaved, had been freed by the
 687 will of Parke Custis. John Syphax was educated in Washington, D.C., and became a property owner in
 688 Alexandria County. His brother, William, was a pioneer in establishing the Washington, D.C., school
 689 system. John Syphax represented Arlington County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1874 to
 690 1875. He served as Alexandria County's Treasurer from 1875 to 1879, and as a justice of the peace.
 691 John Syphax died in 1916.

692 **Henry Turpin**, a carpenter, was born a slave in Goochland County in 1836. He and six brothers and
 693 one sister were emancipated by their master, Edwin Turpin, five years before the American Civil War.
 694 Henry Turpin was taught the trade of carpentry and bought 25 acres of land in Goochland County
 695 shortly after 1865. He moved North after serving in the Virginia General Assembly and was employed
 696 by a sleeping car company. Henry Turpin represented Goochland County in the Virginia House of
 697 Delegates from 1871 to 1873. He died in 1905.

698 **John Watson** was born in Mecklenburg County and served in the Virginia Constitutional Convention
 699 of 1867-1868 and in the House of Delegates in 1869. Mr. Watson was active in promoting schools and
 700 churches in the county. He died while in office.

701 **Maclin C. Wheeler**, a farmer, was born a slave in Brunswick County in 1854, the son of Buck and
 702 Eliza Wheeler. He was highly regarded as a citizen of the county and purchased land in 1885 and 1889.
 703 He represented Brunswick County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1883 to 1884. The date of
 704 his death is unknown.

705 **Robert H. Whitaker** was a farmer who was born a slave in Brunswick County. He was highly
 706 respected by his fellow citizens. He purchased property in the Powellton district of the county. He
 707 represented Brunswick County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1875 to 1877 and served on the
 708 Brunswick County Board of Supervisors. The date of his birth and death are unknown.

709 **Ellis Wilson**, a farmer and minister, was born a slave in Dinwiddie County in 1824. He spent his
 710 entire life in Dinwiddie County as a minister and community leader. In 1870 and 1871, he purchased
 711 four tracts of land comprising 624 acres. He represented Dinwiddie County in the Virginia House of
 712 Delegates from 1869 to 1871. It is believed that Mr. Wilson died in 1904.

713 **Senate of Virginia**

714 **James William D. Bland**, a carpenter, a cooper, and a U.S. tax assessor, was born free in Farmville
 715 in 1844. He represented Prince Edward County and Appomattox in the Virginia Constitutional
 716 Convention and in the Virginia Senate from 1869 to 1870, where he served on the Senate Committee
 717 for Courts of Justice. At the Virginia Constitutional Convention, Mr. Bland proposed a resolution
 718 requesting military authorities to direct railroad companies to allow convention delegates to occupy
 719 first-class accommodations, which many railroads had refused to do. He also introduced a measure
 720 guaranteeing the right of "every person to enter any college, seminary, or other public institution upon
 721 equal terms with any other, regardless of race, color, or previous condition." He was considered to be
 722 the voice of compromise and impartiality in an age of turmoil and partisanship. James Bland was one of
 723 60 persons killed in 1870 when the second floor of the State Capitol collapsed.

724 **Cephas L. Davis**, a minister and teacher, was born a slave in Chase City, Mecklenburg County, in
 725 1843, the son of Charles and Frances Davis. He was educated at the Richmond Theological Institute in
 726 Richmond and ordained in the Baptist Church. He was the first African American school teacher in
 727 Chase City. He served as pastor of some of the largest churches of his day in Virginia and North
 728 Carolina. Mr. Davis represented Mecklenburg County in the Senate of Virginia from 1879 to 1880. In
 729 the 1890s Mr. Davis ran for Congress unsuccessfully in a district in North Carolina. The date of Mr.
 730 Davis' death is unknown.

731 **John M. Dawson** was born in 1835 in New York. He was the pastor of First Baptist Church in
 732 Williamsburg. He was educated at Oberlin College's preparatory department from 1862 to 1865. Mr.
 733 Dawson owned about 60 acres of land in James City County as well as property in Williamsburg. He
 734 served on the Williamsburg Common Council and was elected to the Senate of Virginia, where he
 735 served from 1874 to 1877. In 1882, he ran unsuccessfully as an independent for Congress. Mr. Dawson
 736 died in 1915.

737 **Joseph P. Evans** was born a slave in 1835 in Dinwiddie County and purchased his freedom in 1859.
 738 During Reconstruction, he was a prominent leader of Petersburg's African American community, serving
 739 as a delegate to the Republican state convention of 1867, and in the Virginia House of Delegates from
 740 1871 to 1873, representing Petersburg. Mr. Evans also served in the Senate of Virginia from 1874 to
 741 1875. While a member of the General Assembly, Mr. Evans introduced bills to require compulsory
 742 education, guarantee African Americans the right to serve on juries, and require landlords to give ten
 743 days' notice before evicting a tenant. He also held positions as a letter carrier and as deputy collector of
 744 internal revenue. He was elected president of a Black labor convention in Richmond in 1875, where he
 745 urged African Americans to organize themselves independently in politics and as workers. He ran
 746 unsuccessfully as an independent candidate for Congress in 1884. His son, William Evans, represented
 747 Petersburg in the General Assembly from 1887 to 1888. Joseph P. Evans died in 1888.

748 **Nathaniel M. Griggs** was born a slave in 1857 in Farmville to Matthew and Nicy Washington. He
 749 attended night school and was a tobacco factory worker but was soon discharged for making political
 750 speeches. He entered politics and was appointed deputy collector of internal revenue. He represented
 751 Prince Edward County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1883 to 1884. Later, he was employed
 752 by the Bureau of Printing and Engraving in Washington, D.C. After the failure of the Republican Party
 753 to win reelection in the presidential election of 1892, Mr. Griggs went to work as a jeweler for the
 754 Wanamaker Company in Philadelphia. He died in 1919.

755 **James R. Jones** was a storekeeper and postmaster. His date of birth and death are unknown. Mr.
 756 Jones served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1885 to 1887, representing Mecklenburg County.
 757 He also served in the Senate of Virginia from 1875 to 1877 and from 1881 to 1883.

758 **Isaiah L. Lyons**, a native of New York born in 1842 or 1843, may have come to Virginia before the
 759 American Civil War, as the U.S. Census of 1870 lists him as living with a New York-born wife and a
 760 12-year-old son born in Virginia. He represented Surry, York, Elizabeth City, and Warwick Counties in
 761 the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1871. In the Virginia General Assembly, Mr. Lyons did not oppose
 762 segregated schools; rather he insisted that African American schools should have African American
 763 teachers. Mr. Lyons was a member of the First Baptist Church in Hampton. He died while a member of
 764 the Senate on February 21, 1871. After his death, the Virginia General Assembly awarded his wife \$52
 765 to cover funeral expenses.

766 **William P. Mosely**, a slave born in Virginia in 1819, was a house servant and operated a freight
 767 boat. He obtained his freedom before the American Civil War and became well educated. Mr. Mosely
 768 was a delegate to the Virginia Black Convention of 1865, represented Goochland County in the Virginia
 769 Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, and served in the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1871. He
 770 ran for Congress as a Republican in 1880 but was defeated by the Readjuster candidate.

771 **Francis "Frank" Moss** was a farmer and minister who was born free in 1825 in Buckingham
 772 County. Mr. Moss served in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and served in the
 773 Virginia House of Delegates, representing Buckingham County from 1874 to 1875. He represented
 774 Buckingham County in the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1871.

775 **Daniel M. Norton** was born a slave in Virginia in 1840 and escaped to the North with his brother
 776 Robert around 1850. He studied medicine in Troy, New York, and was licensed as a physician. Dr.
 777 Norton returned to Virginia in 1864 and became one of Hampton's most important political leaders. He
 778 was elected in December 1865 to represent African Americans on a Freedmen's Bureau Court. Early in
 779 1866, as a representative of Hampton area African Americans, he testified before the Joint Congressional
 780 Committee on Reconstruction. Daniel Norton represented James City and York Counties in the Virginia
 781 Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, and also represented these counties in the Senate of Virginia
 782 from 1871 to 1873 and from 1877 to 1887. He built an effective political machine in Hampton, and for
 783 40 years he was a justice of the peace in York County. He was appointed collector of customs in
 784 Newport News in 1862, and served on the board of visitors of Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute.
 785 He ran unsuccessfully as an independent candidate for Congress in 1869. The date of his birth is
 786 unknown; according to descendants researching the family, Dr. Norton died in November 1918 in
 787 Yorktown.

788 **Guy Powell**, a minister, was born a slave in 1851 in Brunswick County, the son of Milton and
 789 Pythana Powell. He was educated at Wayland Seminary in Washington, D.C. He became a property
 790 owner, and in 1879 he and his brother bought 217 acres. In 1881, he bought the half-interest in the land
 791 from his brother. Mr. Powell represented Brunswick County in the Virginia House of Delegates from
 792 1881 to 1882. Mr. Powell also served in the Senate of Virginia, representing Nottoway, Lunenburg, and
 793 Brunswick Counties from 1875 to 1878. For a number of years he served as the pastor of a Baptist
 794 church in Brunswick County and spent the last years of his life in Franklin. The date of his death is
 795 unknown.

796 **John Robinson** was born in 1822. He was a lawyer and graduate of Hampton Institute. He
 797 represented Cumberland County in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and in the

798 Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1873. He also worked as a mail carrier and operated a saloon and
799 general store during the 1870s. The date of his death is unknown.

800 **William N. Stevens** was born in 1850 to a Petersburg family that had been free for three or four
801 generations. Mr. Stevens was a lawyer and represented Petersburg in the Senate of Virginia from 1871
802 to 1878, and represented Sussex County from 1881 to 1882. He wrote to Charles Sumner in 1870 on
803 behalf of the Civil Rights Bill: "We are as much today the victims of this hateful prejudice of caste as
804 though we were not men and citizens." Mr. Stevens died of cancer in 1891. His father, Christopher
805 Stevens, served on the Petersburg City Council, and a brother, J. A. C. Stevens, served as justice of the
806 peace.

807 **George Teamoh**, a carpenter, was born a slave in Portsmouth in 1818. An accomplished orator, he
808 was a delegate to the Virginia Black Convention of 1865 and was a Union League organizer. He served
809 in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, but generally remained silent. He wrote,
810 "agricultural degrees and brickyard diplomas were poor preparation for the complex proceedings." He
811 supported the disenfranchisement of former Confederates. Mr. Teamoh served in the Senate of Virginia
812 from 1869 to 1871, where he supported the formation of a biracial labor union at the Gosport Navy
813 Yard. Later, due to party factionalism, he was denied re-nomination to the Senate of Virginia in 1871,
814 and ran unsuccessfully for the Virginia House of Delegates. He was an advocate of African American
815 self-help, was a founder of Portsmouth's first African American school, and was active in African
816 Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) church affairs in the city.

817 WHEREAS, there is little, if any, mention in the public records about the historical significance of
818 the election and service of the aforementioned African American men to the Commonwealth; however,
819 the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission will make complete biographical information
820 concerning each gentleman available on its website to facilitate education, scholarship, and public
821 awareness of the role and contributions of these valiant men in Virginia's history; and

822 WHEREAS, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission offers the roll call of African
823 Americans elected to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, and to the Virginia House of
824 Delegates and the Senate of Virginia during Reconstruction from 1869 to 1890, as an appropriate tribute
825 during the commemoration of the Sesquicentennial of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1,
826 2013, and the Commission hereby recognizes, honors, venerates, and celebrates the bravery and
827 dedication of the African American men who were pioneers in elected office in Virginia and whose
828 commitment to public service in the face of deep resentment, racial animus, violence, corruption, and
829 intimidation is an exemplary legacy; and

830 WHEREAS, the people of the Commonwealth are indebted to these African American public
831 servants and are the beneficiaries of their tremendous contributions and service to help promote the
832 promise of racial equality, justice, and full citizenship for all citizens; now, therefore, be it

833 RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That African American members
834 elected to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and members elected to the Virginia
835 General Assembly during Reconstruction be recognized for their outstanding service to the
836 Commonwealth on the occasion of the Sesquicentennial of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1,
837 2013; and, be it

838 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate shall post this resolution on the General
839 Assembly's website as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation of their dedicated service to
840 the people of the Commonwealth; and, be it

841 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Delegates, with
842 the assistance of the Capitol Square Preservation Council and the Library of Virginia, shall develop a
843 proposal for consideration by the Joint Rules Committee regarding appropriate commemorative plaques
844 listing (i) the names of the African American members of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of
845 1867-1868 and the locality represented by each member as noted herein and (ii) the names of the
846 African American members elected to the Senate of Virginia and the Virginia House of Delegates,
847 together with their tenure and the Senate or House district that they represented as noted herein, to be
848 displayed in a prominent place in the Capitol; and, be it

849 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Delegates shall
850 submit the proposal to the Joint Rules Committee no later than September 1, 2012; and, be it

851 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Delegates shall
852 coordinate with the MLK Commission to recognize the African American members of the Virginia
853 Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and the African American members elected to the Senate of
854 Virginia and the Virginia House of Delegates during Reconstruction as part of the commemoration of
855 the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation; and, be it

856 RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the
857 Honorable Mamie E. Locke, Chairwoman of the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus; Dr. Patricia I.
858 Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Peter A. Blake, Interim Director of the State Council
859 of Higher Education for Virginia, requesting that they further disseminate copies of this resolution to

860 their respective constituents so that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of
861 Virginia in this matter.