

## House Concurrent Resolution No.

WHEREAS, baseball players called him "Skip" because John Jordan "Buck" O'Neil was the captain of the ship that sent more Negro League veterans ashore to the white Majors than any man in baseball history; and

WHEREAS, Buck O'Neil played briefly in 1937 with the Memphis Red Sox and debuted as a first baseman for the Kansas City Monarchs in 1938. In 1942, O'Neil led the Monarchs to a Negro American League title, hitting .353 during the Negro World Series in the Monarchs four-game sweep of the Homestead Grays; and

WHEREAS, O'Neil's achievements included being named to the East-West All-Star Classic in 1942, 1943, and 1949, managing the West squad in 1950, 1953, 1954, and 1955, and playing for the 1946 Satchel Paige All Stars; and

WHEREAS, in 1944, O'Neil enlisted for a two-year stint with the United States Navy, briefly interrupted his playing career. He returned to the Monarchs in 1946, admitting that he regretted the fact that he was not a member of the Monarchs in 1945 when the great Jackie Robinson played in Kansas City before signing with the Brooklyn Dodgers; and

WHEREAS, in 1948, O'Neil succeeded Frank Duncan as manager of the Kansas City Monarchs, continuing to manage the team until 1955. He guided the Monarchs to league titles in 1948, 1950, 1951, and 1953; and

WHEREAS, in 1956, O'Neil was hired by the Chicago Cubs as a scout, helping the team sign future Hall of Famer Lou Brock, and superstars Oscar Gamble, Lee Smith, and Joe Carter;

WHEREAS, O'Neil's greatest achievement came in 1962 when he became the first African-American coach in the Major Leagues with the Cubs. After 33 years as a Cubbie, he returned home in 1988 to scout for the Kansas City Royals; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, O'Neil began raising money for a museum to preserve and celebrate the history of the Negro Leagues. His efforts led to the opening of the Negro League Baseball Museum in Kansas City, serving as Chair of the Board of Directors from 1990 until his death in 2006. O'Neil also served on the Veterans' Committee of the National Baseball Hall of Fame, was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and is a member of the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, O'Neil gained national prominence with his compelling descriptions of the Negro Leagues as part of Ken Burns' 1994 PBS documentary on baseball; and

WHEREAS, on April 2, 2007, the Kansas City Royals honored O'Neil by placing a fan in the Buck O'Neil Legacy Seat in Kauffman Stadium each game who best exemplifies O'Neil's spirit. The seat is a red seat amidst the all-blue seats behind home plate in Section 127, Seat 9, Row C. The first person to sit in "Buck's seat" was Buck O'Neil's brother, Warren; and

WHEREAS, Buck O'Neil will be remembered as the first African-American coach in Major League Baseball and as one of the finest players in the Negro Leagues. Through his willingness to share his memories of the Negro Leagues, fans everywhere have a greater understanding and deeper appreciation for a significant period in baseball history:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the House of Representatives of the Ninety-sixth General Assembly, First Regular Session, the Senate concurring therein, hereby designate November 13, 2011, as "Buck O'Neil Day" in Missouri and recommends to the people of the state that the day be appropriately observed with activities, events, and ceremonies in honor of the first African-American coach in Major League Baseball; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly requests that the Governor issue a proclamation setting apart November 13, 2011, as "Buck O'Neil Day" in Missouri; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chief Clerk of the Missouri House of Representatives be instructed to prepare a properly inscribed copy of this resolution for Governor Jay Nixon.

Offered by Representative Michael Brown