

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 315

Recognizing the 159th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1866.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 9, 2025

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois (for himself, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. CROCKETT, Ms. BROWN, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. KENNEDY of New York, Mr. FIELDS, Mr. THANEDAR, Ms. STEVENS, Mr. ESPAILLAT, and Ms. NORTON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the 159th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act
of 1866.

Whereas, on April 9, 1866, the Civil Rights Act of 1866 was
passed and enacted into law;

Whereas this year marks the 159th anniversary of the Civil
Rights Act of 1866;

Whereas the Civil Rights Act of 1866 was the first Federal
law to define citizenship and affirm that all citizens are
equally protected by the law;

Whereas the intent of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 was to
combat the attempted suppression of the Emancipation
Proclamation;

Whereas President Andrew Johnson established a reconstruction policy that forced former Confederate States to maintain abolition, swear loyalty to the United States, and pay their war debts in order to rejoin the Union;

Whereas under President Johnson's policy, Southern States adopted and enacted a series of laws designed to restrict freed Blacks and ensure their availability in the labor force;

Whereas these laws severely denied Black citizens equal protection under the law;

Whereas under restricted laws, Blacks were refrained from owning property, entering contracts, and benefiting from labor rights;

Whereas a brave set of legislators believed the Federal Government had a role in shaping a multiracial society in postwar South;

Whereas Senator Lyman Trumbull of Illinois introduced the Civil Rights Act of 1866 in the Senate on January 5, 1866;

Whereas, on February 2, 1866, the Senate voted in favor of the bill 33–13;

Whereas, on March 13, 1866, the House of Representatives voted in favor of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 by a vote of 111–38, with 34 Members not voting;

Whereas, on March 27, 1866, President Andrew Johnson vetoed the Civil Rights Act of 1866;

Whereas, on April 6, 1866, the Senate voted 33–15 to override President Johnson's veto;

Whereas, on April 9, 1866, the House also voted to override President Johnson’s veto by a vote of 122–41 with 21 Members not voting; and

Whereas as a result of both Chambers voting to override President Johnson’s veto, the Civil Rights Act of 1866 became the law of the land: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes the significance of the Civil
3 Rights Act of 1866 and its impact on establishing
4 that all Americans, despite their race, are protected
5 equally under the law;

6 (2) recognizes that the Civil Rights Act of 1866
7 is the framework from which the Thirteenth and
8 Fourteenth Amendments were crafted; and

9 (3) recognizes the importance of the rule of law
10 and advocates to support, protect, and defend the
11 rights of all Americans.

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