

(5) extends the best wishes of the Senate to the people of Israel as they celebrate the 59th anniversary of the independence of the State of Israel.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
29—ENCOURAGING THE
RECOGNITION OF THE NEGRO
BASEBALL LEAGUES AND THEIR
PLAYERS ON MAY 20TH OF EACH
YEAR

Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. OBAMA, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. BROWNBACK, and Mr. MARTINEZ) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. CON. RES. 29

Whereas even though African-Americans were excluded from playing in the Major Leagues of their time with their white counterparts, the desire of many African-Americans to play baseball could not be repressed;

Whereas Major League Baseball did not fully integrate its leagues until July 1959;

Whereas African-Americans began organizing their own professional baseball teams in 1885;

Whereas the skills and abilities of Negro League players eventually made Major League Baseball realize the need to integrate the sport;

Whereas 7 separate baseball leagues, known collectively as the "Negro Baseball Leagues", were organized by African-Americans between 1920 and 1960;

Whereas the Negro Baseball Leagues included exceptionally talented players who played the game at its highest level;

Whereas on May 20, 1920, the Negro National League, the first successful Negro League, played its first game;

Whereas Andrew "Rube" Foster founded the Negro National League on February 13, 1920, at the Paseo YMCA in Kansas City, Missouri, and also managed and played for the Chicago American Giants, and was later inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas Leroy "Satchel" Paige, who began his long career in the Negro Leagues and did not make his Major League debut until the age of 42, is considered one of the greatest pitchers the game has ever seen, and during his long career thrilled millions of baseball fans with his skill and legendary showboating, helping the Cleveland Indians win the pennant in his first big league victory beginning with his first game on July 15, 1948, and was later inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas Josh Gibson, who was the greatest slugger of the Negro Leagues, tragically died months before the integration of baseball, and was later inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas Jackie Robinson, whose career began with the Negro League Kansas City Monarchs, became the first African-American to play in the Major Leagues in April 1947, was named Major League Baseball Rookie of the Year in 1947, subsequently led the Brooklyn Dodgers to 6 National League pennants and a World Series championship, and was later inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas Larry Doby, whose career began with the Negro League Newark Eagles, became the first African-American to play in the American League in July 1947, was an All-Star 9 times in Negro League and Major League Baseball, and was later inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas John Jordan "Buck" O'Neil was a player and manager of the Negro League

Kansas City Monarchs, became the first African-American coach in the Major Leagues with the Chicago Cubs in 1962, served on the Veterans Committee of the National Baseball Hall of Fame, chaired the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum Board of Directors, and worked tirelessly to promote the history of the Negro Leagues;

Whereas James "Cool Papa" Bell played, coached, and managed in the Negro Leagues from 1922 to 1950, discovered, trained, and assisted numerous Negro League players into the Major Leagues, and was later inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas Minnie Minoso played in the Negro Leagues for several years before being allowed to play in the Major Leagues and was denied admission to the Hall of Fame, because during his prime years, he was a victim of racial discrimination;

Whereas the talents of such players as Josh Gibson, James "Cool Papa" Bell, and Oscar Charleston earned them recognition in the Baseball Hall of Fame as well as the Sporting News List of Baseball Greatest Players, but they were denied admission to the Major Leagues due to the color of their skin;

Whereas Autozone Park in Memphis, Tennessee, hosted the inaugural Civil Rights Game between the defending World Champion St. Louis Cardinals and the Cleveland Indians in commemoration of the civil rights movement, on March 31, 2007; and

Whereas by achieving success on the baseball field, African-American baseball players helped break down color barriers and integrate African-Americans into all aspects of society in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes the teams and players of the Negro Baseball Leagues for their achievements, dedication, sacrifices, and contributions to both baseball and our Nation; and

(2) encourages the observation of Negro Leaguers Recognition Day on May 20 of each year.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I, along with Senators REID, LEAHY, SPECTER, OBAMA, CLINTON, BROWNBACK, and MARTINEZ, have proudly submitted a concurrent resolution honoring the Negro Baseball Leagues and their players by encouraging the recognition of Negro Leaguers Recognition Day May 20 of each year. My relationship with the Negro Leagues players began when I successfully worked to persuade Major League Baseball to give pension benefits to former players. In 2004, Major League Baseball agreed to put up \$1 million for monthly payments to 27 former Negro Leaguers. Last year, I worked with the families of several of the most notable Negro Leaguers to pass a Senate resolution designating May 20, 2006—the date on which the Negro National League played its first game—as Negro Leaguers Recognition Day.

I am submitting a resolution honoring the Negro Leaguers again this year—in cooperation with Representative COHEN in the House—to demonstrate the support in both Chambers for recognizing Negro Leaguers Recognition Day on May 20 of each year. I hope that this will be a day when Negro Leaguers and their families will return to the ballpark to be honored

for their historic contributions to the game of baseball and to bridging racial divisions in our country.

Since 1885, long before Major League Baseball was integrated in 1947, African-Americans organized their own professional leagues. These leagues did not succeed because of racial prejudice and lack of adequate financial backing. However, this changed dramatically with the inception of the first successful Negro league—the Negro National League. Its creation was the result of the efforts of an African-American player and manager named Andrew "Rube" Foster. Mr. Foster's success inspired the formation of other leagues.

As a result, on October 3, 1924, the first Negro League World Series game was played between the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro National League and Hilldale of Philadelphia of the Eastern Colored League. This historic and exhaustive first series lasted 10 games, covered a span of almost 3 weeks, and was played in four different cities. In the end, Kansas City claimed the championship.

Some of the names we know and some we don't. Among them are Jackie Robinson, the first African-American to break the baseball color barrier; Satchel Paige, who was considered one of the greatest pitchers of all time; Josh Gibson, who was a prolific home-run hitter; Larry Doby, the first African-American to play in the American League in July 1947; Buck O'Neil, who was the first African-American coach in the Major Leagues and who went on to head the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum; Cool Papa Bell, who was known as the fastest man in baseball; and Minnie Minoso; the "Cuban Comet," who played on the New York Cubans when they won the Negro League World Series, and broke the color barrier on the Chicago White Sox when he joined the team in 1951.

It is important that we remember and honor these players and their teammates in the Negro Leagues. In breaking down baseball's color barrier, these pioneers dealt a blow to hatred and prejudice across America. Today, we can honor them by recognizing May 20 each year as Negro Leaguers Recognition Day.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO
MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, April 26, 2007, at 9:30 a.m., in open session to receive testimony on legal issues regarding individuals detained by the Department of Defense as unlawful enemy combatants.

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