

SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION NO. RS2024-804

A resolution celebrating the 100th anniversary of American Baptist College.

WHEREAS, American Baptist College, founded in 1924 in Nashville, Tennessee, has played a pivotal role in the education and empowerment of countless individuals through its commitment to academic excellence, social justice, and spiritual growth; and

WHEREAS, the college, located on 53 acres on the Cumberland River, has nurtured generations of leaders in the Baptist faith and broader communities, contributing to the advancement of knowledge and fostering a spirit of service; and

WHEREAS, established as a seminary by the all-Black, National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. and the all-White Southern Baptist Convention, Inc. to train members of the clergy; and

WHEREAS, during the height of the Civil Rights Movement, American Baptist College trained leaders including future Congressman John Lewis, Rev. C. T. Vivian, Dr. Bernard Lafayette, Rev. James Bevel, among many others; and

WHEREAS, American Baptist College instructors were also active in the Civil Rights Movement and included Rev. Kelly Miller Smith, Sr., Rev. Dr. James E. Henry, and Rev. James Lawson; and

WHEREAS, other notable graduates of American Baptist College include Rev. Davie Tucker, Rev. Cora Alston, Rev. James "Tex" Thomas, Rev. James Brooks, Rev. Dr. Temeka Robinson and many more; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, American Baptist College earned status as a Historically Black College and University ("HBCU") from the U.S. Department of Education; and

WHEREAS, American Baptist College has been led by Dr. Forrest E. Harris for 25 years, and he the longest tenured president of a HBCU in the nation; and

WHEREAS, American Baptist College has consistently championed diversity and inclusion, reflecting the rich tapestry of cultures and backgrounds that comprise its student body and faculty; and

WHEREAS, throughout its 100 years, the college has maintained a steadfast commitment to its mission of preparing students for leadership in church and society, instilling values that emphasize compassion, integrity, and advocacy for the marginalized; and

WHEREAS, American Baptist College continues to be a beacon of light for Nashville, the state of Tennessee, and beyond. Its focus on faith-based teaching and its commitment to social justice make it truly authentic and provides a foundation and service for social justice in all walks of life; and

WHEREAS, the college has achieved significant milestones in academic programs, community engagement, and partnerships with various organizations, enhancing its reputation as a beacon of hope and education; and

WHEREAS, the centennial celebration serves as an opportunity to honor the legacy of the college's founders, faculty, staff, alumni, and supporters whose dedication has shaped the institution's vision and impact; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the Metropolitan Council recognize this significant milestone.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the Metropolitan County Council hereby goes on record as celebrating the 100th anniversary of American Baptist College and commending its contributions to education, faith, and community service.

Section 2. That the Metropolitan Council encourages continued support for the college as it embarks on its next century, fostering the development of future leaders committed to justice, equity, and spiritual growth.

Section 3. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.

SPONSORED BY:

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Kyonzté Toombs  
Member of Council