

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 52nd Legislature (2009)

3 HOUSE

4 RESOLUTION 1035

By: Cannaday and Shumate

5  
6 AS INTRODUCED

7 A Resolution commending the life of John Hope  
8 Franklin; offering condolences; and directing  
9 distribution.

10  
11 WHEREAS, John Hope Franklin, the famous United States historian,  
12 was born on January 2, 1915, in Rentiesville, Oklahoma; and

13 WHEREAS, named after John Hope, the former president of Atlanta  
14 University, Franklin was the son of Buck Colbert Franklin, one of  
15 the first black lawyers in the Oklahoma Indian Territory, and Mollie  
16 Parker Franklin, a school teacher and community leader; and

17 WHEREAS, he graduated from Booker T. Washington High School in  
18 Tulsa, Oklahoma; and

19 WHEREAS, although he was the valedictorian of his high school  
20 class, Franklin was not allowed to enroll at the University of  
21 Oklahoma because he was African-American; and

22 WHEREAS, in 1931, Franklin enrolled at Fisk University, a  
23 historically black college in Nashville, Tennessee; and  
24

1       WHEREAS, he received an undergraduate degree from Fisk  
2 University in 1935, a masters degree from Harvard University in  
3 1936, and a doctorate in history in 1941 from Harvard University;  
4 and

5       WHEREAS, he married Aurelia Whittington in 1940, with whom he  
6 had a child, John Whittington Franklin, born in 1952; and

7       WHEREAS, in 1945, he wrote a book on African-American history  
8 originally titled *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of American*  
9 *Negroes*; and

10       WHEREAS, in the early 1950s, while serving as a professor at  
11 Howard University, Franklin traveled to Thurgood Marshall's law  
12 office to help prepare the brief that led to the historic *Brown v.*  
13 *Board of Education* decision; and

14       WHEREAS, in 1956, he became chairman of the all-white history  
15 department at Brooklyn College, and later served as a professor and  
16 chairman of the history department at the University of Chicago for  
17 16 years; and

18       WHEREAS, Franklin later served as a professor of history at Duke  
19 University and also at Duke University Law School; and

20       WHEREAS, Franklin was a prolific writer, and has received more  
21 than 130 honorary degrees; and

22       WHEREAS, in 1976, the National Endowment for the Humanities  
23 selected Franklin for the Jefferson Lecture, the U.S. federal  
24 government's highest honor for achievement in the humanities; and

1       WHEREAS, his best-known accomplishment in his later years was in  
2 1997, when he was appointed chairman of the advisory board for  
3 President Clinton's One America: The President's Initiative on  
4 Race; and

5       WHEREAS, this outstanding American passed away on March 25,  
6 2009, at the age of 94 years.

7       NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
8 OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 52ND OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

9       THAT the Oklahoma House of Representatives hereby commends the  
10 full life and many accomplishments of this outstanding Oklahoma-born  
11 historian, the late John Hope Franklin.

12       THAT the Oklahoma House of Representatives offers its most  
13 sincere condolences to the surviving Franklin family.

14       THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to John Hope  
15 Franklin's son, John Whittington Franklin.

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