

Proclamation

CENTRE REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS PROCLAMATION 2026-1

A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY AS
BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN THE CENTRE REGION

WHEREAS, each February, we observe Black History Month in communities across the United States. Black History Month grew out of the work of Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History in 1926. What began as Negro History Week has evolved into a month-long national observance celebrating the defining achievements and contributions of African Americans to our nation's economic, cultural, spiritual, scientific, legal, and political development. We honor the central role African Americans have played in our history; and

WHEREAS, the 2026 Black History Month theme, *A Century of Black History Commemorations*, marks one hundred years since the first national observance dedicated to elevating and preserving Black history. This centennial invites reflection on the enduring importance of recognizing African American history not as a separate narrative, but as an essential and inseparable part of the American story. It calls upon communities to continue the work of remembrance, education, and celebration begun in 1926; and

WHEREAS, over the past century, Black History Month commemorations have helped to broaden understanding, foster dialogue, and inspire generations to pursue equity and justice. These observances remind us that the preservation and sharing of history is an act of community-building and civic responsibility; and

WHEREAS, we pay tribute to the many generations whose birthright of freedom and dignity and the earned wealth produced by their hard toil, creativity, and intellect was brutally and wrongly stolen from them but who nevertheless persisted in the face of unimaginable cruelty and adversity to enable a more just and equitable future. The ongoing effort to align our nation's lived reality with its founding ideals continues today; and

WHEREAS, we recognize and commend the invaluable contributions of African Americans that have shaped our Centre Region communities. We honor local individuals, our neighbors, friends, and colleagues, and groups who have enriched all our lives in meaningful ways and continue to move us toward the ideals of fairness, justice, and opportunity; and

WHEREAS, in the communities across the Centre Region, together, we continue our work to create a welcoming, inclusive, and engaged community where diversity is cherished and celebrated; and

NOW, THEREFORE, in recognition of African Americans, past and present, in this our Centre Region, the Centre Region Council of Governments General Forum hereby proclaims February 2026 to be Black History Month and encourages all residents to reflect upon this century of commemoration, to celebrate our shared heritage, and to continue efforts to create a community that is more just, peaceful, and prosperous for all.

Attest:

By:

Benjamin Estell
Executive Director, Centre Region COG

Betsy Whitman
Chair, Centre Region COG