House Resolution 1285
By: Representatives Metze of the 55th, Thomas of the 56th, Smyre of the 135th, Mitchell of the 88th, Abrams of the 89th, and others

A RESOLUTION

Recognizing Turner Theological Seminary and honoring Bishop Henry McNeal Turner; and for other purposes.

WHEREAS, Turner Theological Seminary, named in honor of Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, the resident bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Georgia, began as a department of Morris Brown College in 1894; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Turner, born to Sarah Greer and Hardy Turner, free people, in 1834, was a pioneer in Georgia government and the African Methodist Episcopal Church; and

WHEREAS, he helped to set the framework for the democratic form of government, serving Georgia in the Constitutional Convention that produced the Georgia Constitution of 1877; and

WHEREAS, he was known for demanding the respect of the legislators to acknowledge the humanity of African Americans and to recognize the inalienable rights given to African Americans by God; and

WHEREAS, fighting to get legislators to establish rights for African Americans under the Constitution in the same manner that they applied to white citizens, Bishop Turner, having obtained his education from a law firm in Abbeville, South Carolina, was elected to represent Macon in 1878; and

WHEREAS, he converted to Methodism, and decided to become a preacher, receiving his license to preach in the Methodist church in 1853; and

WHEREAS, married to Eliza Preacher and father to 14 children, Bishop Turner and his family ventured into Louisiana, Missouri, and throughout Georgia, to set up African Methodist Episcopal churches; and
WHEREAS, in an effort to expand the educational knowledge of African Americans, Bishop
Turner used the Bible to teach the fundamentals of formal education to African Americans
in towns and plantations that served as an organization of the African Methodist Episcopal
Church; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Turner held pastorates in Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington, D.C.;
and

WHEREAS, Bishop Turner's legacy of religious education continues in the theological
seminary that bears his name, which was approved in 1900; and

WHEREAS, the Trustee Board of Morris Brown College, under the leadership of Bishop
William Reid Wilkes, Sr., authorized Turner Theological Seminary to become a founding
constituent of the Interdenominational Theological Center in 1958, and Dr. George A. Sewell
was appointed Director and Dean; and

WHEREAS, the seminary received its own charter in 1975, and thereby, its first separate
Board of Trustees was elected under the leadership of Bishop Richard Allen Hildebrand; and

WHEREAS, those who followed Dr. Sewell as deans have included Dr. Josephus R. Coan,
Dr. Cecil W. Cone, Dr. George L. Champion, Dr. Clayton D. Wilkerson, and Dr. Daniel W.
Jacobs, Sr.; and

WHEREAS, during Dr. Jacobs's tenure, the Frederick Hilborn Talbot Hall was erected and
the enrollment has more than doubled; and

WHEREAS, the Frederick Hilborn Talbot Hall, containing offices, a chapel, laundromat
concession area, 32 dormitory rooms, 20 efficiencies, and five one-bedroom apartments, was
the result of the tireless efforts of Bishop Talbot; and

WHEREAS, the legacy of Bishop Henry McNeal Turner is kept alive under the leadership
of the present President-Dean, Dr. John F. Green, through the Seminary's Annual Founders'
Observance; and

WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper that the outstanding accomplishments of this
remarkable and distinguished bishop and seminary be appropriately recognized.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
the members of this body recognize the 122nd Founders’ Observance of Turner Theological
Seminary in honor of Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and February 9, 2016, as Bishop Henry
McNeal Turner Day within the State of Georgia.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to
Turner Theological Seminary.