

## House Resolution 1211

By: Representatives Williams of the 37<sup>th</sup>, Allen of the 40<sup>th</sup>, Wilkerson of the 38<sup>th</sup>, Reeves of the 34<sup>th</sup>, Anulewicz of the 42<sup>nd</sup>, and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing Zion Baptist Church as memorialized in the Old Zion Heritage Museum; and  
2 for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, on April 8, 1866, 88 formerly enslaved men and women abandoned their  
4 membership in the Marietta First Baptist Church, established their own congregation in a  
5 brush arbor, and named it Zion Baptist Church with Reverend Ephriam Rucker serving as  
6 its first pastor; and

7 WHEREAS, the congregation purchased a small plot of land for \$70 and completed a brick  
8 place of worship in 1888 where the congregation worshiped for the next 90 years, making  
9 improvements along the way; and

10 WHEREAS, in 1978, because the congregation had outgrown this original building, a new  
11 sanctuary was built and occupied, leaving Old Zion to decline toward complete ruin over the  
12 next nearly two decades; and

13 WHEREAS, Old Zion was placed on the National Registry of Historic Places in 1990; and

14 WHEREAS, in 1995, the Zion congregation made the insightful decision to launch a  
15 campaign to restore Old Zion, which was completed in 1997; and

16 WHEREAS, it was determined that Old Zion would be a perfect venue to highlight, preserve,  
17 and display facets of Marietta and Cobb County black history, art, and culture; the Old Zion  
18 Heritage Museum opened in 2003; and

19 WHEREAS, throughout the years, the museum has sought to synthesize its activities with  
20 available community resources leveraged to optimize and maximize cultural benefits to  
21 citizens, statesmen, and tourists alike by collaborating with the City of Marietta, Kennesaw  
22 State University, Marietta City Schools, Cobb County Schools, and others; and

23 WHEREAS, Old Zion Heritage Museum has sponsored and hosted successful programs and  
24 events such as weddings, concerts, seminars, contests, and tours; and

25 WHEREAS, some of these sponsorships include: bringing to Marietta's public Dr. Oral  
26 Moses, the Paine College Choir, Morehouse Glee Club, Fisk Jubilee Singers, Georgia Mass  
27 Choir, Gospel singers Montel Jordan and Rhonda Thomas, and a combination of local groups  
28 throughout the Metro area in "A Walk Through Black Church Music"; sponsoring a major  
29 Black History Month program each year when the National Black History Month Theme is  
30 used to inform and honor our citizens; participating each year in the Marietta Pilgrimage  
31 when visitors from throughout Georgia and beyond tour the museum; and hosting  
32 international high school and college students from France and Germany; and

33 WHEREAS, in 2016, the museum presented the off-Broadway production, "ZION! THE  
34 MUSICAL," which is a history of the church performed at the Marietta High School  
35 Performing Arts Center that attracted more than 1,000 patrons; and

36 WHEREAS, the current senior pastor of Zion Baptist Church is Reverend Eric Beckham, and  
37 the chairperson of the museum board of directors is Lamuriel Adams; and

38 WHEREAS, the Old Zion Heritage Museum Annual Black History Program is February 23,  
39 2020, titled African Americans and the Vote and presented by Dr. Howard O. Lindsey,  
40 professor emeritus of history at DePaul Univeristy; and

41 WHEREAS, the Old Zion Heritage Museum remains dedicated to the development of new  
42 strategies and ideas to enhance the knowledge of and appreciation for local black history.

43 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that  
44 the members of this body recognize Zion Baptist Church as memorialized in the Old Zion  
45 Heritage Museum.

46 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
47 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to the  
48 Old Zion Heritage Museum.