



# State of North Carolina

**ROY COOPER**  
GOVERNOR

## THE NEGRO NATIONAL LEAGUE CENTENNIAL

2020

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

### A PROCLAMATION

**WHEREAS**, on February 13, 1920, Andrew “Rube” Foster, Charles I. Taylor, and several other African American team owners came together to form the Negro National League due to the Jim Crow laws that excluded black Americans from participating in American major league baseball events; and

**WHEREAS**, the Negro National League was one of several professional black baseball leagues, often referred to as Negro baseball leagues, that operated in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century; the league was forced to close in 1931 due to the financial hardships of the Great Depression, but resurfaced in 1933 in a limited capacity; and

**WHEREAS**, the success of the Negro National League spawned a number of other black baseball leagues, including the Negro American League, the Southern Negro League, and the Eastern Colored League; these organizations became home to some of North Carolina’s greatest baseball stars; and

**WHEREAS**, North Carolina fashioned notable players such as Walter Fenner “Buck” Leonard, a Rocky Mount native who was the second North Carolinian inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame; Edward W. Pearson, Sr., Spencer Alexander, Fred Worthy, Otto Briggs, Frazier Robinson, Butch Davis, Dr. Herbert Jones Erwin, and Carl Edward “Satch” Forney were other notable North Carolina league players and figures; and

**WHEREAS**, North Carolina was comprised of many black-owned baseball clubs throughout the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, including the Asheville Royal Giants, Raleigh Tigers, Black Star Line, Raleigh Tar Heels, and Winston-Salem Pond Giants; and

**WHEREAS**, in the late 1940s, as professional baseball began to integrate, dozens of Negro league players made their move to Major League Baseball (MLB) teams, resulting in many black-operated baseball leagues shutting their doors for good; and

**WHEREAS**, the Negro National League and the leagues that formed in its wake are integral to baseball history and helped define the game that is still played today; North Carolina is proud to have been a part of this rich history, and recognizes the centennial of the organization that spawned a movement;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, ROY COOPER, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim February 13, 2020, as “**THE NEGRO NATIONAL LEAGUE CENTENNIAL**” in North Carolina, and commend its observance to all citizens.



  
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Roy Cooper  
Governor

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this sixth day of February in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-fourth.