



Spencer J. Cox

Governor

## Declaration

**Whereas**, the contributions and history of African Americans are essential to the history and success of this nation and state;

**Whereas**, since the 19th century African Americans have been a part of Utah's history, beginning with prominent fur trappers and explorers like James P. Beckwourth, who traversed the mountains and valleys of what would become the Utah territory;

**Whereas**, Utah has been shaped and influenced by prominent African Americans like Colonel Charles Young, who served at Fort Duchesne and made history as only one of three African Americans to graduate from the United States Military Academy at West Point in the 19th century, and eventually went on to be the first African American National Park Superintendent;

**Whereas**, African Americans have been active in Utah politics including Reverend Robert Harris, who became the first African American elected to the Utah Legislature in 1976, Mia Love, who became the first Republican Black woman elected to the United States House of Representatives in 2014, Burgess Owens, who became the first African American man from Utah elected to the United States House of Representatives, and Sandra Hollins, who is the first African American woman to serve in the Utah State Legislature; all of these individuals paved the way for many other African Americans to serve and represent communities in Utah;

**Whereas**, in December 2020, the Utah Compact on Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion was adopted in support of the idea that all people are created equal and a racially equitable state requires us to act and create a society in which race and ethnicity do not determine or limit value, opportunity, and life outcomes;

**Whereas**, through the One Utah Roadmap, the Cox-Henderson Administration is committed to improving life outcomes for people with historically and systemically less access to opportunity, including women, people of color, and LGBTQIA+ individuals;

**Whereas**, African American leaders in academics, athletics, industry, music, politics, and more, continue to enhance the lives of Utahns each day; and,

**Whereas**, African Americans throughout our great state continue to shape the history, culture, and future of Utah;

**Now, Therefore**, I, Spencer J. Cox, governor of the great state of Utah, do hereby declare February 2022 as

**Black History Month in Utah**

Spencer J. Cox  
Governor