

SR021-0304

10 **A SIMPLE RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE**
20 **STATE OF MARYLAND CREATING A STATE HOLIDAY REMEMBERING**
30 **THE HONORABLE CLAENCE BLOUNT**

40 **WHEREAS:** Blount served 31 years in the state Senate and became the first black majority
50 leader of the chamber; and,

60 **WHEREAS:** Blount had a reputation of setting a high standard of achievement as he became
70 an icon for the positive side of politics; and,

80 **WHEREAS:** He was elected to the state Senate in 1971 and became the Senate's
90 first African-American majority leader in 1983; and,

100 **WHEREAS:** Four years later, he became the first black chairman of a Senate
110 committee; and,

120 **WHEREAS:** Blount's demeanor and background as a decorated World War II
130 veteran prompted his colleagues to dub him "The Conscience of the Senate;" and,

140 **WHEREAS:** Blount was one of four children and was the son of a North Carolina
150 sharecropper who became a beloved educator before becoming one of the most
160 influential members of the state Senate; and,

170 **WHEREAS:** He helped his father, who lost his job on the railroad, sharecrop on a
180 tobacco plantation, and because he didn't have shoes, he couldn't attend school; and,

190 **WHEREAS:** Blount graduated from Morgan State University in 1950 and earned a
200 master's degree from Johns Hopkins University; and,

210 **WHEREAS:** In the 2002-2003 Legislative Year, this Body passed Simple Resolution
220 SR008-0203, a simple resolution concerning the "REMEMBRANCE OF SENATOR
230 CLARENCE BLOUNT;" and,

240 **WHEREAS:** "Senator Blount was a pioneer among black politicians in Baltimore
250 City and the state of Maryland," said Del. Howard Rawlings; and,

260 **WHEREAS:** Blount's political strength lay in his ability to make, and keep, friends
270 in high places, including the governor's office. That loyalty resulted in money for the
280 causes he cared about - mostly education; and,

290 **WHEREAS:** In office, Blount was instrumental in the contentious 1997 "state
300 takeover" of the Baltimore City school system, delivering an impassioned speech
310 minutes before a crucial vote on behalf of legislation that put millions of dollars into
320 the school system in return for management reforms and a state role in running the
330 system; and,

340 **WHEREAS:** Senator Blount was widely known nationwide for his distinguished
350 public service; and,

360 **WHEREAS:** Clarence Blount should be distinguished by the State of Maryland and
370 honored with a holiday remembering his distinguished and honorable service not only
380 to this state but also to his country during World War II; and,

390 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature urges the
400 Maryland General Assembly to make the day of Clarence Blount's birth, April 20, a Statewide
410 holiday; and,

420 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That this holiday will serve to recognize the distinguished
430 public service of the late Honorable Clarence Blount.

440 **MANDATES:** Speaker of the House Michael Busch
450 President of the Senate Michael Miller
460 Governor Robert Ehrlich
470 Lt. Governor Michael Steele

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