

**Washington, D.C.** - Today, the House of Representatives passed H.Res. 1361, Recognizing North Carolina Central University (NCCU) on its 100th Anniversary by a vote of 408-1. NCCU is one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The resolution was sponsored by Representatives David Price (NC-04) and G.K. Butterfield (NC-01). Rep. Price's district includes NCCU and Rep. Butterfield earned an undergraduate and juris doctorate from the university.

Yesterday, Rep. Price addressed the House of Representatives to recognize the institution's impact on North Carolina and urge swift passage of the resolution. The text of Rep. Price's remarks is below.

## **CONGRESSMAN DAVID PRICE**

### **FLOOR STATEMENT ON H. RES. 1361**

#### **Recognizing North Carolina Central University on its 100th Anniversary**

**May 19, 2010**

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.Res.1361, which commemorates the centennial anniversary of North Carolina Central University and honors its founder, Dr. James E. Shepard. I've introduced this resolution as the member of this body privileged to represent North Carolina Central, but I'm proud to say it has the support of the entire North Carolina delegation as well as a number of other members who recognize the university's significance.

People frequently talk about the "Big 3" universities in the Research Triangle area of North Carolina – referring to Duke University, North Carolina State University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill – but I like to remind them that it is actually the "Big 4". North Carolina Central is fully as integral to the historical fabric of our state as its three peer institutions; it is one of the oldest and most prestigious Historically Black Colleges and

Universities in the nation; and it has rapidly assumed an important role as a research institution.

Established by Dr. James E. Shepard in 1909 in Durham, North Carolina, the University first opened its doors to students a year later as the National Religious Training School and Chautauqua. Dr. Shepard was a visionary leader guided by the conviction that individual self-improvement and collective self-advancement were inextricably intertwined. "There is no economy in ignorance," he declared. "Education is a vastly expensive resource, but ignorance is incomparably more so. Ignorance and poverty are cures for nothing."

Dr. Shepard led the University until his death in 1947, guiding the institution through several name changes; watching the University grow in size and mission; and helping the school to gain the support of the North Carolina state legislature. In 1925, thanks to Dr. Shepard's leadership, the school became the nation's first state-supported liberal arts college for African-American students.

Now an integral part of the University of North Carolina system, NC Central offers bachelor's degrees in more than 100 fields of study and graduate degrees in about 40 disciplines to a student body of about 8,500. U.S. News and World Report recently ranked NC Central the top public HBCU in the nation and one of the top ten HBCUs overall. The NC Central School of Law has been named the "Best Value Law School" in the nation by National Jurist magazine for two consecutive years.

NC Central is also renowned for its contributions to the cultural and performing arts. The University is home to the "Marching Sound Machine," an award-winning marching band that will be performing on New Year's Day 2011 in the Rose Parade, and the NC Central Jazz Ensemble, which recently performed in the Newport Jazz Festival.

NC Central also has a strong history of athletic prowess: its sports teams have won 41 conference championships, three NCAA regional titles, and two national championships. More than 50 of its student-athletes have won individual NCAA and NAIA national championships; and student-athletes representing NCCU competed in every Olympic Games from 1956 to 1976 in track and field, capturing eight Olympic medals, including five gold medals, during that span.

As a co-chair of the congressional National Service Caucus, I must also note that NC Central

was the first state university in North Carolina to establish community service as a requirement for graduation and has been recognized by the Carnegie Foundation as a "community-engaged university". It should therefore come as no surprise that the University has enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship with its home city of Durham throughout its 100-year history.

Thousands of NC Central graduates have served Durham as community leaders, educators, professionals, entrepreneurs and volunteers. However, the reach of NC Central extends far beyond the borders of the Triangle region of North Carolina. In the century since its founding, the University has graduated approximately 40,000 students and proudly boasts many distinguished alumni, including civil rights lawyer and educator Julius L. Chambers, basketball Hall of Famer Sam Jones, two-time Olympic track gold medalist Lee Calhoun, NC Superior Court Judge Toby Fitch, state Senator and former Speaker Dan Blue, and state Rep. Mickey Michaux, not to mention my friend and lead cosponsor of this legislation, Congressman G.K. Butterfield.

In the words of NC Central's current Chancellor, Dr. Charlie Nelms: "It's no small accomplishment that an institution of higher education - and in this case founded by African-Americans at a time when African-Americans were barred from most colleges - survived and thrived for 100 years." I could not agree more. Under the visionary leadership of Dr. Shepard, Dr. Nelms, and all who served the institution in between, the University has flourished and has touched countless lives in North Carolina and throughout the country and the world.

With that, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this resolution and yield back the remainder of my time.

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