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## *House of Representatives*

### VISCLOSKY CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH

**Mr. Speaker:** It is with great respect and sincere admiration that I rise today to celebrate Black History Month and its 2015 theme - *A Century of Black Life, History, and Culture*. This year's theme reflects on the extraordinary contributions of African Americans in the arts, literature, music, history, sports, science, and pop culture. In celebration of this year's theme, we reflect on several of the important milestones that helped form the cornerstone of African American culture and tradition. Part of the African American fight for freedom included the struggle to ensure that their ideas and talents mattered in American culture and history.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the rise of jazz music can be linked to African Americans of the post World War I generation. The Harlem Renaissance put the spotlight on African Americans writers and artists, making their names known nationwide. In the 1960s, African American museums opened across the nation, displaying and commemorating advances made by African Americans in art, history, and science. Also during this time of transformation, African American athletes excelled in individual and team sports, including baseball, track and field, football, boxing, and basketball. In addition, student activism in the 1960s led to the black studies movement, the creation of black professional organizations, and doctoral programs at American universities.

This month and always, it is important that we honor and celebrate America's greatest advocates for equal rights and civil liberties. Along with this month's theme, we celebrate those who have contributed to the foundation of African American culture, arts, and entertainment, including Maya Angelou, Langston Hughes, Jackie Robinson, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Patricia Bath, and Thurgood Marshall, among many others. As we pay tribute to these heroes of American history, let us remember their profound perseverance, sacrifice, and struggle in the fight for freedom and equality, and the remarkable impact their contributions have had in shaping our great nation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues join me in celebrating Black History Month and honoring those who fought, and continue to fight, for civil rights and justice. We honor the African American scholars, artists, athletes, and entertainers who have played such a critical role in changing the landscape of American society for the better.