



## Proclamation

*WHEREAS, the State of Colorado celebrates Black leaders and their accomplishments during Black History Month; and*

*WHEREAS, Barney Ford was born enslaved 200 years ago in 1822, escaped at age 26, and wrote to his enslaver "If I can do better by myself than I can with you, I feel that I am at liberty to do so; for this is common to all free men."; and*

*WHEREAS, Barney Ford was one of the first African Americans to arrive in Denver in 1860 and was soon called the "King of Restaurateurs"; and*

*WHEREAS, Barney Ford suffered several significant business losses due to the Great Denver Fire, bankruptcy, and financial ruin, yet remained undeterred in his pursuits; and*

*WHEREAS, Barney Ford was the first Colorado African American to serve on a grand jury and ran for the territorial legislature in 1873; and*

*WHEREAS, Barney Ford was one of the territory's Black leaders who petitioned for universal suffrage in the state constitution; and*

*WHEREAS, Barney Ford impacted not just Colorado, but the nation with his far-reaching influence and pioneering efforts for Black civil rights; and*

*WHEREAS, a stained glass portrait of Barney Ford hangs in the Colorado House of Representatives chambers in honor of his impact; and*

*WHEREAS, Barney Ford's legacy remains important today as Colorado citizens take stock of where racism persists and gives visibility to the people and organizations creating change;*

*THEREFORE, I, Jared Polis, Governor of the State of Colorado, do hereby proclaim February 1, 2022 as*

### **BARNEY FORD DAY**

*in the State of Colorado.*



*GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado, this first day of February, 2022*

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Polis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

*Jared Polis  
Governor*