SPECIAL DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

A G E N D A

January 18, 2010 - 7:00 P.M. - City Hall Council Chambers
15 East Loockerman Street, Dover, Delaware

The Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC), an advisory and advocacy body which facilitates tolerance and understanding among all groups in the City of Dover, will be holding a community meeting on Monday, January 18, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 15 East Loockerman Street, Dover, Delaware. The purpose of the meeting is to afford citizens the opportunity to comment on the proposal to recommend that the Delaware General Assembly apologize for the period of slavery and its aftermath in the state.

Originally passed as a resolution by the DHRC in April 2007, the matter was tabled by the Dover City Council in May of that year amid concern that more public input was necessary. Since that time, the DHRC has researched the matter further and has collected a plethora of similar resolutions passed by the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives, and by legislatures in the states of Maryland, North Carolina, Alabama, New Jersey, Florida, and Virginia. These documents are available in the paperless packet on the City's website at www.cityofdover.com

Members of the public will have three (3) minutes each to state their views on the DHRC's resolution or on the issue generally. After one more such community meeting, the matter will be returned to the Dover City Council for reconsideration. For questions or for further information, please call or email DHRC Chair Dr. Sam Hoff at 857-6633 or shoff@desu.edu.

The following guidelines will be used for the public comment period during the meeting:

1) Written testimony may be given to the City Clerk's Office to be distributed to members for their review up to 12:00 noon on Friday, January 15, 2010;

2) Citizens wishing to comment should contact the City Clerk's Office at 736-7008 or e-mail at tmcdowell@dover.de.us, in order to be placed on a list to assist the Chair in recognizing speakers.

3) Each speaker will be given three (3) minutes for their comments.

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THE AGENDA ITEMS AS LISTED MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED IN SEQUENCE. THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE TO INCLUDE THE ADDITION OR THE DELETION OF ITEMS, INCLUDING EXECUTIVE SESSIONS.

Business Case
Letter of Apology
Presented by

The Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC)

To the
Dover City Council
October 29, 2009

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Introduction:

The Dover Human Relation Commission (DHRC) is presenting this business case to seek the Dover City Council's approval to present the DHRC resolution, which implores the Delaware State Legislation to issue a Letter of Apology (Exhibit A) for its role in the institution of slavery. This package is in keeping with the charter of the DHRC, which states that the Commission will help the City of Dover by:

(1) *Fairness, respect.* Promote and develop an environment of fairness and respect among its citizens;

(2) *Monitoring.* Develop ways to measure and monitor community relations, particularly those that are sources of intergroup conflict;

(3) *Intergroup relations.* Involve all segments of the community in understanding and appreciating the benefits of positive intergroup relations;

(4) *Issues.* Offer a range of programs and services that will help its residents and neighborhoods prevent and resolve issues of human relations; and

(5) *Intergroup conflict.* Develop ways of anticipating, preparing for, and relieving community tensions arising from intergroup conflict

Business Case:

At this time[1] six (6) states, Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, Alabama, Florida and New Jersey have already past measures that in one form or another apologize for their role in slavery. On February 27, 2007, Representative Steve Cohan (TN) introduced H.RES.194 Title: *Apologizing for the enslavement and racial segregation of African-Americans.* The last major activity on the bill was on July 29, 2008, where it was passed/agreed to in the House. On June 11, 2009, the U.S. Senate passed a concurrent resolution apology for slavery.

The subject of whether or not the government (federal, state, or municipal) should issue a formal apology for the government's role in the institution of slavery is being hotly debated in legislative bodies across the country. Politicians and experts have come out on both sides of the issue. Senator John McCain during his bid for

[1] May 27, 2009

President, has said that he was in favor of such a move, "I would support it, because I think it's appropriate," he said in response to questions from The Examiner on the campaign trail. "I certainly would support any recognition of the dark chapters in our history.[2]" In 1997 Senator Jesse Jackson Jr., took the middle road by saying, "I do not question the intentions of those who are sponsoring this legislation because I believe their intentions are good and their concern is genuine. But just a simple apology, without anything attached to it, seems a little hollow to me.[3]" Then there are people like Roger Clegg[4] who claims that an apology "serves no legitimate purpose since the villains and victims are long since deceased.[5]" This argument is one that does not understand or recognize the connection between historical events and present day activities. In 2003, President George W. Bush recognized the lasting effects of slavery during a speech he gave at Goree Island, Senegal. "While physical slavery is dead, the legacy is alive," and "For racial bigotry fed by slavery did not end with slavery or with segregation.[6]"

One of the primary concerns people have about a letter of apology is that any discussion about an apology would have to lead to a discussion and demands for reparations. People like Mr. Clegg believe that an apology has no choice but to lead to reparations, "It taps into white guilt and helps perpetuate social programs the civil rights establishment likes, such as racial preferences and ultimately reparations.[7]" What are reparations? According to the Merriam-Webster on line dictionary reparations are:

1 a: a repairing or keeping in repair **b** *plural:* **REPAIRS**

2 a: the act of making amends, offering expiation, or giving satisfaction for a wrong or injury **b:** something done or given as amends or satisfaction

3: the payment of damages **:** **INDEMNIFICATION** ; *specifically* **:** compensation in money or materials payable by a defeated nation for damages to or

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[2] *McCain: Senate should apologize for slavery* http://www.examiner.com/a-996211~McCain__Senate_should_apologize_for_slavery.html. October 18, 2007

[3] *An Apology For Slavery? Contrition Carries Conditions.* Jackson, Jesse Jr. June 17, 1997. http://www.jessejacksonjr.org/

[4] Mr. Clegg is the President and General Counsel, Center for Equal Opportunity

[5] *Lawmakers to push for U.S. apology for slavery.* Koch, Wendy. February 28, 2008. http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-02-27-slavery_N.htm

[66] Virginia Senate Joint Resolution No. 332 line 55-57

[7] IBID

expenditures sustained by another nation as a result of hostilities with the defeated nation —usually used in plural[8]

In relation to this discussion, the word reparation is associated with the payment of funds by the government for a wrong that has been committed to a specific demographic. In recent American history, reparations have been given to the surviving Japanese Americans who were interned during WWII. A part of the program was to give to each of the former detainee $20,000.00. This was a relatively small group of people (roughly 120,000) and if the detainee was not alive, the $20,000.00 was divided amongst their heirs. The federal government has given other apologies, in February 2008; the Senate apologized for atrocities committed against Native Americans in this case there were no financial reparations given. In 2005, the Senate apologized for standing by during a lynching campaign against African Americans and not enacting anti-lynching laws, no financial reparations were attached to that resolution. The idea for reparations for slavery is closely associate with the term "40 acres and a mule", a term that many people mistakenly associate with a promise by the federal government to all blacks freed after the Civil War. The term actually comes from Special Field Orders, No. 15, by Major General William Tecumseh Sherman on January 16, 1865. This order allowed for the confiscation of 400,000 acres of land along the coast of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida and dividing it into 40-acre parcels, on which were to be settled approximately 18,000 freed slave families and other black refugees then living in the area. However, the order was rescinded by President Andrew Jackson after President Lincoln's death and the majority of the land was returned to its former owners.

An apology does not mean finical reprobation. Again, to quote Senator Jesse Jackson Jr., "It is not politically possible for the country to apologize just for slavery and grant reparations to African Americans exclusively. Therefore, I have a different recommendation. We should provide a full employment economy with jobs for ALL Americans, create a health care system that provides comprehensive and universal health care for ALL Americans, create a mixed economy that provides affordable housing for ALL Americans, invest in a public school system that provides a quality and

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[8] http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reparations

multicultural education for ALL Americans, not just something for African Americans.[9]" An apology cannot be created in a vacuum and it cannot appear to benefit only one segment of the population, it has to be seen as serving all the citizens of the state.

An apology serves three primary functions for the population of the State of Delaware and by extension the citizens of Dover.

1) Education: There exists a separation of time between the outlawing of slavery and today's general population that has the effect of clouding the impact of slavery on the social interaction that exists. Our access to first hand knowledge of the practice slavery and the treatment of African American slaves has passed from our midst, this apology serves as a tool to remind people that the institution did exists and it had a dehumanizing effect on the population. People like Mr. Clegg want to suggest that since everyone with firsthand experience has died the issue is over. The education will help explain the spider web of events that has occurred since slavery. It is an education how slavery lead the way for Jim Crow and how Jim Crow transitioned into social stigma, stereotyping, and racial basis.

2) Recognition: This apology acknowledges and affirms the belief that the former institution of slavery was wrong. That it was a violation of the basic human rights of the African Americans that were ensnared by the practice and that it became such a divisive subject that it almost prevented the existence of the United States. The New Jersey resolution capture the essence of slavery in America, "WHEREAS, Slavery, or the "Peculiar Institution," in the United States resembled no other form of involuntary servitude, as Africans were captured and sold at auction as chattel, like inanimate property or animals[10]". Even today, there are international documents that warn of the dehumanizing aspects of slavery. One such reference can be found in Article 4 of the United Nations, Universal Declaration of Human Rights that states, "No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.[11]"

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[9] *An Apology For Slavery? Contrition Carries Conditions.* Jackson, Jesse Jr. June 17, 1997. http://www.jessejacksonjr.org/

[10] State Of New Jersey Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 270

[11] Article 4 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml

3) A vehicle to move forward: The basic understanding of the purposed Letter of Apology is that it is not a vehicle to place blame or guilt of a past practice. This has to be a tool that is used to help mend the wounds that have become integrated into our societal physiological profile. The division that still exists for many people from the different races is not a representation of nature, but the manifestation of generational past practices. The apology issues by the state of North Carolina clearly states that, "Whereas, an apology for centuries of injustice cannot erase the past, but the acknowledgment of wrongs can speed healing and reconciliation and help all North Carolinians confront our collective past as we move together into the future.[12]" Any study of history should not be an exercise in blame; it is a study of relationship and consequences.

Slavery has been a part of Delaware history beginning with the attempted slavery of the Native American population and later in 1639, with the introduction of the first black slave from the West Indies. By the time of the revolution it is estimated as much as 25% of the state's population was slaves. Slavery was not officially outlawed in the state until the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865. The State has been remarkably quiet on the issue of an Apology for Slavery action. As such, it is incumbent that the citizens of Delaware make their position on this issue known, we cannot control what the rest of the State has to say on this subject, but we can clearly state what the position of the City of Dover is.

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[12] General Assembly Of North Carolina Session 2007 H D House Joint Resolution DRHJR70358-LR-134 (03/28) page 2 lines 39-41

Exhibits

Exhibit A DHRC Apology Proposal

"Whereas, human beings were enslaved and sent from Africa and other parts of the world to North America, including Delaware;

"Whereas, Delaware legalized slavery and practiced it throughout its colonial period;

"Whereas, Delaware maintained the inhuman and immoral institution of slavery from the time the State ratified the Federal Constitution until slavery was outlawed in 1865 by the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, which Delaware voted to reject that year;

"Whereas, Delaware continued to discriminate against those of color by approving segregation of education in its 1897 State Constitution, a practice that lasted until Brown v. Board of Education in 1954;

"Whereas, Delaware passed and enforced Jim Crow laws to deny the rights of black citizens for much of the 20th century;

"Be it Therefore Resolved that the Dover Human Relations Commission urges the Delaware General Assembly to pass a resolution acknowledging and expressing its profound apology for the State's practice of slavery and for the historic wrongs committed against all persons who suffered discrimination and injustice under this dehumanizing system;

"Be it Further Resolved that the DHRC implores all citizens of the State of Delaware to be tolerant and understanding of one another so as to eliminate all bias, prejudice, and discriminatory behavior."

Exhibit B Virginia

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 332

Offered January 10, 2007

Prefiled January 3, 2007

Atoning for the involuntary servitude of Africans and calling for reconciliation among all Virginians.

Patron—Marsh

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, slavery has been documented as a worldwide practice since antiquity, dating back to 3500 B.C. in ancient Mesopotamia; and

WHEREAS, during the course of the infamous Atlantic slave trade, millions of Africans became involuntary immigrants to the New World, and the first African slaves in the North American colonies were brought to Jamestown, in 1619; and

WHEREAS, the Atlantic slave trade was a lucrative enterprise, and African slaves, a prized commodity to support the economic base of plantations in the colonies, were traded for tropical products, manufactured goods, sugar, molasses, and other merchandise; and

WHEREAS, some African captives resisted enslavement by fleeing from slave forts on the West African coast and others mutinied aboard slave trading vessels, cast themselves into the Atlantic Ocean, or risked the cruel retaliation of their masters by running away to seek freedom; and

WHEREAS, although the United States outlawed the transatlantic slave trade in 1808, the domestic slave trade in the colonies and illegal importation continued for several decades; and

WHEREAS, slavery, or the "Peculiar Institution," in the United States resembled no other form of involuntary servitude, as Africans were captured and sold at auction as chattel, like inanimate property or animals; and

WHEREAS, to prime Africans for slavery, the ethos of the Africans was shattered, they were brutalized, humiliated, dehumanized, and subjected to the indignity of being stripped of their names and heritage, and families were disassembled as husbands and wives, mothers and daughters, and fathers and sons were sold into slavery apart from one another; and

WHEREAS, a series of complex colonial laws were enacted to relegate the status of Africans and their descendants to slavery, in spite of their loyalty, dedication, and service to the country, including heroic and distinguished service in the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, the system of slavery had become entrenched in American history and the social fabric, and the issue of enslaved Africans had to be addressed as a national issue, contributing to the Civil War from 1861 to 1865 and the passage of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which abolished slavery and involuntary servitude on December 18, 1865; and

WHEREAS, after emancipation from 246 years of slavery, African Americans soon saw the political, social, and economic gains they made during Reconstruction dissipated by virulent and rabid racism, lynchings, disenfranchisement of African-American voters, Black Codes designed to reimpose the subordination of African Americans, and Jim Crow laws that instituted a rigid system of de jure segregation in virtually all areas of life and that lasted until the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act; and

WHEREAS, throughout their existence in America and even in the decades after the Civil Rights Movement, African Americans have found the struggle to overcome the bitter legacy of slavery long and arduous, and for many African Americans the scars left behind are unbearable, haunting their psyches and clouding their vision of the future and of America's many attributes; and

WHEREAS, acknowledgment of the crimes and persecution visited upon other peoples during World War II is embraced lest the world forget, yet the very mention of the broken promise of "40 acres and a mule" to former slaves or of the existence of racism today evokes denial from many quarters of any responsibility for the centuries of legally sanctioned deprivation of African Americans of their endowed rights or for contemporary policies that perpetuate the status quo; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, during a trip to Goree Island, Senegal, a former slave port, President George W. Bush stated, "Slavery is one of the greatest crimes of history, and its legacy still vexes the United States ... Small men took on the powers and airs of tyrants and masters. Years of unpunished brutality and bullying and rape produced a dullness and hardness of conscience. Christian men and women

became blind to the clearest commands of their faith and added hypocrisy to injustice. While physical slavery is dead, the legacy is alive. My nation's journey toward justice has not been easy, and it is not over. For racial bigotry fed by slavery did not end with slavery or with segregation ... and many of the issues that still trouble America have roots in the bitter experience of other times ... But however long the journey, our destiny is set: liberty and justice for all"; and

WHEREAS, in the Commonwealth, home to the first African slaves, the vestiges of slavery are ever before African American citizens, from the overt racism of hate groups to the subtle racism encountered when requesting health care, transacting business, buying a home, seeking quality public education and college admission, and enduring pretextual traffic stops and other indignities; and

WHEREAS, European and African nations have apologized for their roles in what history calls the worst holocaust of humankind, the Atlantic Slave Trade, and racial reconciliation is impossible without some acknowledgment of the moral and legal injustices perpetrated upon African Americans; and

WHEREAS, an apology for centuries of brutal dehumanization and injustices cannot erase the past, but confession of the wrongs can speed racial healing and reconciliation and help African American and white citizens confront the ghosts of their collective pasts together; and

WHEREAS, the story of the enslavement of Africans and their descendants, the human carnage, and the dehumanizing atrocities committed during slavery should not be purged from Virginia's history or discounted; moreover, the faith, perseverance, hope, and endless triumphs of African Americans and their significant contributions to the development of this Commonwealth and the nation should be embraced, celebrated, and retold for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, the perpetual pain, distrust, and bitterness of many African Americans could be assuaged and the principles espoused by the Founding Fathers would be affirmed, and great strides toward unifying all Virginians and inspiring the nation to acquiesce might be accomplished, if on the eve of the commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the first permanent English settlement in the New World, the Commonwealth acknowledged and atoned for its pivotal role in the slavery of Africans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby atone for the involuntary servitude of Africans and call for reconciliation among all Virginians; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the Secretary of the Commonwealth, the Secretary of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Executive Director of the State Council of Higher Education, the Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System, and the Executive Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Virginia State Chapter, requesting that they further disseminate copies of this resolution to their respective constituents so that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.

Exhibit C Maryland

A BILL ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

Apology for Slavery

FOR the purpose of requiring the Governor of Maryland to apologize on behalf of the citizens of Maryland for the State's history of slavery, its long-held silence in the face of slavery, and the atrocities committed under slavery in the State; requiring the Governor to issue the apology on the 144th anniversary of the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Lincoln; and generally relating to an apology for slavery in Maryland.

Preamble

WHEREAS, There were slaves in Maryland from the time that the colony was founded, and historians recognize that the earliest slave was brought to Maryland in the 1630s; and

WHEREAS, A 1663 law stated that unless a black man could prove that he had contracted his labor, he was presumed to be a slave in perpetuity; and

WHEREAS, Slaveholding grew by significant proportions in the 1690s, so that while slaves made up only 3% of the population of the colony in 1658, their numbers grew to 15 to 25% of the populations of the various counties in 1710; and

WHEREAS, The growth of the tobacco trade in Maryland, and Maryland's resulting wealth, was heavily dependent on the importation and use of slaves; and

WHEREAS, Historians recognize that, among the American colonies, only Virginia imported more slaves than Maryland; and

WHEREAS, As in other states, slaves in Maryland were whipped and grossly mistreated, with large numbers of slaves forced to suffer from terrible respiratory and other ailments for which they were offered little treatment; and

WHEREAS, Husbands and wives were torn apart and their children were ripped from their families, as all were sold within the chains of slavery; and

WHEREAS, In the 1820s slaveholding continued to flourish in Maryland, despite the efforts of abolitionists who held antislavery meetings in Baltimore and

Hagerstown, presented an antislavery petition to the General Assembly, and convinced one Baltimore newspaper to refuse the advertisements of slave dealers; and

WHEREAS, Although slaveholding in Maryland began a gradual decline after 1810, with the slave population dropping from 111,500 in 1810 to 102,400 in 1830, Marylanders still owned 87,189 slaves in 1860; and

WHEREAS, From 1830 on, despite this drop in the overall number of slaves, Maryland remained the northernmost slaveholding state; and

WHEREAS, The General Assembly responded to the increasing numbers of freed blacks in the 1830s by restricting the activities of blacks and establishing a State board to oversee "the Removal of Coloured People", the repatriation of freed blacks to Africa; and

WHEREAS, Militant slaveholders lobbied the General Assembly in 1860 to strengthen slavery, end manumission, and forbid blacks from peddling, traveling, holding their own church services, or having their own schools; and

WHEREAS, Baltimoreans rioted on April 19, 1861, in opposition to the movement of Union troops, from Philadelphia to Washington, through the town; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

(1) The Governor of Maryland shall apologize on behalf of the citizens of Maryland for the State's history of slavery, its long-held silence in the face of slavery, and the atrocities committed under slavery in the State; and

(2) The Governor shall issue the apology on September 22, 2006, the 144th anniversary of the issuance by President Abraham Lincoln of the Emancipation Proclamation.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2006.

Exhibit D North Carolina

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 2007

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION DRHJR70358-LR-134 (03/28)

Sponsors: Representatives Womble and Parmon (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

A JOINT RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S PROFOUND REGRET FOR THE INSTITUTION AND LASTING EFFECTS OF SLAVERY.

Whereas, many European settlers, including some of those who sailed on the Mayflower in 1620, came to the American colonies as indentured servants, served out the terms of their servitude, and then enjoyed the fruits of their labor and the protections of law; and

Whereas, some American Indians were exploited as slaves until they were replaced by Africans; and

Whereas, at least 4,000,000 Africans and their descendants were held in involuntary servitude in the United States and the 13 American colonies between 1619 and 1865; and

Whereas, the practice of slavery began in North Carolina soon after it was established as a colony; and

Whereas, the Trans-Atlantic slave trade was a lucrative enterprise and uncompensated African slave labor was the backbone of the economic base of plantations in the colonies; and

Whereas, the sale of human beings as chattel was sanctioned and perpetuated through the laws of North Carolina and of the United States; and

Whereas, under the slave codes, persons held in involuntary servitude were not permitted to own property, to carry arms, or to move about without permission; and

Whereas, a number of Africans and their descendants who bought their freedom or were set free by former slaveholders during the 18th and early 19th centuries successfully engaged in various labors, trades, and businesses in the State despite great obstacles; and

Whereas, in the 19th century, the State began to discourage black businesses and the presence of free blacks in North Carolina and passed legislation to restrict the liberty of free blacks. An 1826 law provided that a free black who moved into the State

and failed to leave after being notified of the law, after 20 days, could be fined $500.00 or held to labor for 10 years or less. An 1830 law prohibited free blacks from returning to this State after being absent for a period of 90 days or more; and
Whereas, the passage of such harsh laws served to force free persons of color from the State, often splitting families and resulting in the loss of property and economic gains; and
Whereas, in 1830, North Carolina law provided that a slave could be sentenced to 39 lashes if he or she was found guilty of teaching another slave how to read; and
Whereas, in 1860, the General Assembly enacted legislation requiring free persons of color to select their own masters and become slaves; and
Whereas, American slavery was officially abolished with the passage of the 13th amendment to the United States Constitution in 1865; and
Whereas, during the Reconstruction era former slaves and their children came under the protections of law and started making significant economic and social gains; and
Whereas, by the turn of the 20th century, a backlash against black progress during Reconstruction resulted in the rise of the white supremacist and segregationist movements; and
Whereas, Jim Crow laws were enacted to create a rigid "separate but equal" segregation system that discriminated against non-whites in many areas of life; and,
Whereas, the United States Supreme Court declared segregation unlawful in the Brown v. Board of Education decision in 1954 and ordered the end of segregated public schools. However, soon after that decision, the General Assembly ratified a resolution providing that "the mixing of the races in the public schools within the State cannot be accomplished and if attempted would alienate public support of the schools to such an extent that they could not be operated successfully"; and
Whereas, with the Civil Rights Movement, the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act finally led to the end of Jim Crow laws and the 1965 Voting Rights Act ended systematic racial discrimination in voting for federal, state, and local elections; and
Whereas, from the beginning of their presence in North Carolina and on into the 21st century, African-Americans struggle to overcome the economic and social affects of slavery and the legacy of the institutionalized racism and segregation spawned by slavery; and
Whereas, the harsh story of North Carolina slavery must be acknowledged and the faith, perseverance, hope, and endless triumphs of the descendant of slaves should be recognized; and
Whereas, an apology for centuries of injustice cannot erase the past, but the acknowledgment of wrongs can speed healing and reconciliation and help all North Carolinians confront our collective past as we move together into the future; Now, therefore,
Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

SECTION 1. The General Assembly formally apologizes for the injustice, cruelty, and brutality of slavery, cites its historical role in perpetuating slavery and racism, and expresses its profound regret for the practice of involuntary servitude in this State and for the many hardships experienced, past and present, on account of slavery.
SECTION 2. This resolution is effective upon ratification.

Exhibit E Alabama

Rep(s). By Representatives Moore (M), Dunn, Coleman, Hilliard, Kennedy, Hinshaw, Buskey, Gordon, Thomas (J), Mitchell, Salaam, England, Baker (L), Holmes, Knight, Scott, Robinson (O), Rogers, Bandy, Warren and Hall

HJR321

ENROLLED, House Joint Resolution,

APOLOGIZING FOR THE WRONGS OF SLAVERY; EXPRESSING PROFOUND REGRET FOR ALABAMA'S ROLE IN SLAVERY; AND EXPRESSING INTENT THAT THIS RESOLUTION SHALL NOT BE USED IN, OR BE THE BASIS OF, ANY TYPE OF LITIGATION.

WHEREAS, slavery has been documented as a worldwide practice since antiquity, dating back to 3500 B.C. in ancient Mesopotamia; and

WHEREAS, during the course of the infamous Atlantic Slave Trade, millions of Africans became involuntary immigrants to the New World, and millions more died during passage; the first African slaves in the North American colonies were brought to Jamestown, in 1619; and

WHEREAS, the Atlantic Slave Trade was a lucrative enterprise, and African slaves, a prized commodity to support the economic base of plantations in the colonies, were traded for tropical products, manufactured goods, sugar, molasses, and other merchandise; and

WHEREAS, some African captives resisted enslavement by fleeing from slave forts on the West African coast and others mutinied aboard slave trading vessels, cast themselves into the Atlantic Ocean, or risked the cruel retaliation of their masters by running away to seek freedom; and

WHEREAS, although the United States outlawed the transatlantic slave trade in 1808, the domestic slave trade in the colonies and illegal importation continued for several decades; and

WHEREAS, slavery, or the "Peculiar Institution," in the United States resembled no other form of involuntary servitude, as Africans were captured and sold at auction as chattel, like inanimate property or animals; and

WHEREAS, to prime Africans for slavery, the fundamental values of the Africans were shattered, they were brutalized, humiliated, dehumanized, and subjected to the indignity of being stripped of their names and heritage, women and girls were raped, and families were disassembled as husbands and wives, mothers and daughters, and fathers and sons were sold into slavery apart from one another; and

WHEREAS, a series of complex colonial laws were enacted to relegate the status of Africans and their descendants to slavery, in spite of their loyalty, dedication, and service to the country, including heroic and distinguished service in the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, the system of slavery had become entrenched in American history and the social fabric, and the issue of enslaved Africans had to be addressed as a national issue, contributing to the Civil War from 1861 to 1865 and the passage of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which abolished slavery and involuntary servitude on December 18, 1865; and

WHEREAS, after emancipation from 246 years of slavery, African-Americans soon saw the political, social, and economic gains they made during Reconstruction dissipated by virulent and rabid racism, lynchings, disenfranchisement of African-American voters, Black Codes designed to reimpose the subordination of African-Americans, and Jim Crow laws that instituted a rigid system of de jure segregation in virtually all areas of life and that lasted until the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act; and

WHEREAS, throughout their existence in America and even in the decades after the Civil Rights Movement, African-Americans have found the struggle to overcome the bitter legacy of slavery long and arduous, and for many African-Americans the scars left behind are unbearable, haunting their psyches and clouding their vision of the future and of America's many attributes; and

WHEREAS, acknowledgment of the crimes and persecution visited upon other peoples during World War II is embraced lest the world forget, yet the very mention of the broken promise of "40 acres and a mule" to former slaves or of the existence of racism today evokes denial from many quarters of any responsibility for the centuries of legally sanctioned deprivation of African-Americans of their endowed rights or for contemporary policies that perpetuate the status quo; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, during a trip to Goree Island, Senegal, a former slave port, President George W. Bush stated, "At this place, liberty and life were stolen and sold. Human Beings were delivered and sorted, and weighed, and branded with the marks of commercial enterprises, and loaded as cargo on a voyage without return. One of the largest migrations of history was also one of the greatest crimes of history ... Small men took on the powers and airs of tyrants and masters. Years of unpunished brutality and bullying and rape produced a dullness and hardness of conscience. Christian men and women became blind to the clearest commands of their faith and added hypocrisy to injustice ... For 250 years the captives endured an assault on their culture and their dignity ... While physical slavery is dead, the legacy is alive. My nation's journey toward justice has not been easy, and it is not over. The racial bigotry fed by slavery did not end with slavery or with segregation ... and many of the issues that still trouble America have roots in the bitter experience of other times ... We can finally judge the past by the standards of President John Adams, who called slavery 'an evil of colossal magnitude' ..."; and

WHEREAS, in Alabama, the vestiges of slavery are ever before African-American citizens, from the overt racism of hate groups to the subtle racism encountered when requesting health care, transacting business, buying a home, seeking quality public education and college admission, and enduring pretextual traffic stops and other indignities; and

WHEREAS, European and African nations have apologized for their roles in what history calls the worst holocaust of humankind, the Atlantic Slave Trade, and racial reconciliation is impossible without some acknowledgment of the moral and legal injustices perpetrated upon African-Americans; and

WHEREAS, an apology for centuries of brutal dehumanization and injustices cannot erase the past, but confession of the wrongs can speed racial healing and reconciliation and help African-American and white citizens confront the ghosts of their collective pasts together; and

WHEREAS, the story of the enslavement of Africans and their descendants, the human carnage, and the dehumanizing atrocities committed during slavery should not be purged from Alabama's history or discounted; moreover, the faith, perseverance, hope, and endless triumphs of African-Americans and their significant contributions to the development of this state and the nation should be embraced, celebrated, and retold for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, the perpetual pain, distrust, and bitterness of many African-Americans could be assuaged and the principles espoused by the Founding Fathers would be affirmed, and great strides toward unifying all Alabamians and inspiring the nation to acquiesce might be accomplished, if on the eve of the commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the first permanent English settlement in the New World, the state acknowledged and atoned for its pivotal role in the slavery of Africans; and

WHEREAS, acknowledging that there is a difference between what is wrong and right, and that slavery as an American "Institution" was a wrong committed upon millions of Black Americans and that their ancestors are the beneficiaries of such wrongs, including, but not limited to, segregation under Jim Crow, housing discrimination, discrimination in education, and other ills inflicted upon Black people; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alabama, the Governor, and its citizens are conscious that under slavery many atrocities and gross violations of human rights were imposed upon Black people, and that acknowledging these facts can and will avert future tragedies, be they in the Sudan, or other parts of the world; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alabama has a long history of civil rights involvement and is on the cutting edge of effective measures to promote racial tolerance, such as the Birmingham Pledge; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That we express our profound regret for the State of Alabama's role in slavery and that we

apologize for the wrongs inflicted by slavery and its after effects in the United States of America; we express our deepest sympathies and solemn regrets to those who were enslaved and the descendants of slaves, who were deprived of life, human dignity, and the constitutional protections accorded all citizens of the United States; and we encourage the remembrance and teaching about the history of slavery, Jim Crow laws, and modern day slavery, to ensure that these tragedies will neither be forgotten nor repeated.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That it is the intent of the Legislature that this resolution shall not be used in, or be the basis of, any type of litigation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution shall be known and referred to as the "Moore-Sanders Apology for Slavery Act."

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to each state elected official; the Executive Director of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education; the Executive Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Alabama Chapter; and the Executive Director of The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Alabama Chapter; requesting that they further disseminate copies of this resolution to their respective constituents so that they may be apprised of the sense of the Alabama Legislature in this matter.

Resolutions, Legislative

Slavery

Exhibit F Florida

SCR 2930—A concurrent resolution expressing profound regret for the involuntary servitude of Africans and calling for reconciliation among all Floridians.

WHEREAS, African slavery was sanctioned and enforced through laws enacted by Florida's first Territorial Legislative Council in 1822, and

WHEREAS, the Council and its successors did, over four decades, construct a legal framework that perpetuated African slavery in one of its most brutal and dehumanizing forms, and

WHEREAS, this legal framework included such lawful punishments as the following: "That any negro or other slave duly convicted of robbery or burglary shall suffer death or have his or her ears nailed to posts and there stand for one hour and receive 30 lashes on his or her bare back at the discretion of the court," and

WHEREAS, in 1827, free Africans were denied the right to vote and in later years were, by law, so repressed, restricted, and harassed that by 1850 most had been driven from Florida, and

WHEREAS, African slavery was entrenched within the plantation culture of Middle Florida to such a degree that by the year 1860, 73 percent of the total population of Leon County were slaves, and

WHEREAS, there were early political leaders in Florida who advocated a vigorous defense of slavery, and

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature has identified grave injustices inflicted upon African slaves and freemen by the state, and

WHEREAS, even though the laws permitting such injustices have been repealed, it is important that the Legislature express profound regret for the shameful chapter in this state's history and, in so doing, promote healing and reconciliation among all Floridians,

NOW,

THEREFORE,

Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida, the House of Representatives Concurring:
That the Legislature expresses its profound regret for Florida's role in sanctioning and perpetuating involuntary servitude upon generations of African slaves.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature calls for healing and reconciliation among all residents of the state.

Exhibit G New Jersey

ACR270 PAYNE, STANLEY

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION apologizing for the wrongs of slavery and expressing New Jersey's profound regret for its role in slavery.

WHEREAS, Slavery has been documented as a worldwide practice since antiquity, dating back to 3500 B.C. in ancient Mesopotamia; and

WHEREAS, During the existence of the Atlantic Slave Trade, millions of Africans became involuntary immigrants to the New World, and millions more died during passage; the first African slaves in the North American colonies were brought to Jamestown, in 1619; and

WHEREAS, The Atlantic Slave Trade was a lucrative enterprise, and African slaves, a prized commodity to support the economic base of plantations in the colonies, were traded for tropical products, manufactured goods, sugar, molasses, and other merchandise; and

WHEREAS, Some African captives resisted enslavement by fleeing from slave forts on the West African coast and others mutinied aboard slave trading vessels, cast themselves into the Atlantic Ocean, or risked the cruel retaliation of their masters by running away to seek freedom; and

WHEREAS, Although the United States outlawed the transatlantic slave trade in 1808, the domestic slave trade in the colonies and illegal importation continued for several decades; and

WHEREAS, Slavery, or the "Peculiar Institution," in the United States resembled no other form of involuntary servitude, as Africans were captured and sold at auction as chattel, like inanimate property or animals; and

WHEREAS, To prime Africans for slavery, the fundamental values of the Africans were shattered; they were brutalized, humiliated, dehumanized, and subjected to the indignity of being stripped of their names and heritage; women and girls were raped, and families were disassembled as husbands and wives, mothers and daughters, and fathers and sons were sold into slavery apart from one another; and

WHEREAS, A series of complex colonial laws was enacted to relegate the status of Africans and their descendants to slavery, in spite of their loyalty, dedication, and service to the country, including heroic and distinguished service in the Revolutionary War, Civil War, and all other conflicts and military actions involving the United States military; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey, with as many as 12,000 slaves, had one of the largest populations of captive Africans in the northern colonies; and

WHEREAS, In 1786, the State of New Jersey enacted a law that prohibited the importation of slaves into this State and made owners punishable for the mistreatment of slaves; and

WHEREAS, Although the State of New Jersey passed a gradual emancipation law in 1804, it was the last northern state to emancipate its slaves, and required all children of slaves born after

July 4, 1804 to remain the "servant of the owner of his or her mother" until they were twenty-one years of age for women or twenty-five years of age for men; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey had one of the severest slave codes in the northern colonies and was one of the few northern states to sanction the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which permitted authorities in free states to return runaway slaves to their owners, with the result that Underground Railroad passengers had to proceed with utmost caution in this State; and

WHEREAS, In 1846, New Jersey passed a law officially abolishing slavery; and

WHEREAS, The system of slavery had become entrenched in American history and the social fabric, and the issue of enslaved Africans had to be addressed as a national issue, contributing to the Civil War from 1861 to 1865 and the passage of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which abolished slavery and involuntary servitude on December 18, 1865; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey adopted the Thirteenth Amendment on January 23, 1866 only after originally rejecting it on March 16, 1865; and

WHEREAS, After emancipation from 246 years of slavery, African-Americans soon saw the political, social, and economic gains they made during Reconstruction dissipated by virulent and rabid racism, lynchings, disenfranchisement of African-American voters, Black Codes designed to reimpose the subordination of African-Americans, and Jim Crow laws that instituted a rigid system of state sanctioned segregation in virtually all areas of life and lasted until the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act; and

WHEREAS, Throughout their existence in America and even in the decades after the Civil Rights Movement, African-Americans have found the struggle to overcome the bitter legacy of slavery long and arduous, and for many African-Americans the scars left behind are unbearable, haunting their psyches and clouding their vision of the future and of America's many positive attributes; and

WHEREAS, Our nation acknowledges the crimes and persecution visited upon other peoples during World War II lest the world forget, yet the very mention of the broken promise of "40 acres and a mule" to former slaves or of the existence of racism today evokes denial from many quarters of any responsibility for the centuries of legally sanctioned deprivation of African-Americans of their endowed rights or for contemporary policies that perpetuate the existing state of affairs; and

WHEREAS, In 2003, during a trip to Goree Island, Senegal, a former slave port, President George W. Bush stated, "At this place, liberty and life were stolen and sold. Human Beings were delivered and sorted, and weighed, and branded with the marks of commercial enterprises, and loaded as cargo on a voyage without return. One of the largest migrations of history was also one of the greatest crimes

of history.... For 250 years the captives endured an assault on their culture and their dignity.... Small men took on the powers and airs of tyrants and masters. Years of unpunished brutality and bullying and rape produced a dullness and hardness of conscience. Christian men and women became blind to the clearest commands of their faith and added hypocrisy to injustice.... We can finally judge the past by the standards of President John Adams, who called slavery 'an evil of colossal magnitude'.... My nation's journey toward justice has not been easy, and it is not over. The racial bigotry fed by slavery did not end with slavery or with segregation ... and many of the issues that still trouble America have roots in the bitter experience of other times ...; and

WHEREAS, In New Jersey the vestiges of slavery are ever before African-American citizens, from the overt racism of hate groups to the subtle racism encountered when requesting health care, transacting business, buying a home, seeking quality public education and college admission, and enduring pretextual traffic stops and other indignities; and

WHEREAS, European and African nations have apologized for their roles in what history calls the worst holocaust of humankind, the Atlantic Slave Trade, and racial reconciliation is impossible without some acknowledgment of the moral and legal injustices perpetrated upon African-Americans; and

WHEREAS, An apology for centuries of brutal dehumanization and injustices cannot erase the past, but confession of the wrongs can speed racial healing and reconciliation and help African-American and white citizens confront the ghosts of their collective pasts together; and

WHEREAS, The story of the enslavement of Africans and their descendants, the human carnage, and the dehumanizing atrocities committed during slavery should not be purged from New Jersey's history or discounted; moreover, the faith, perseverance, hope, and endless triumphs of African-Americans and their significant contributions to the development of this State and the nation should be embraced, celebrated, and retold for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, The perpetual pain, distrust, and bitterness of many African-Americans could be assuaged and the principles espoused by the Founding Fathers would be affirmed, and great strides toward unifying all New Jerseyans and inspiring the nation to acquiesce might be accomplished, if on the eve of the commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the first permanent English settlement in the New World, the State acknowledged and atoned for its role in the slavery of Africans; and

WHEREAS, Acknowledging that there is a difference between wrong and right, and that slavery as an American "institution" was a wrong committed upon millions of African Americans and that their descendants continue to suffer from the effects of Jim Crow

laws, segregation, housing discrimination, discrimination in education, and other ills inflicted upon African-Americans; and

WHEREAS, The State of New Jersey, the Governor, and its citizens are conscious that under slavery many atrocities and gross violations of human rights were imposed upon African-Americans, and that acknowledging these facts can and will avert future tragedies, be they in the Sudan, or other parts of the world; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED *by the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey (the Senate concurring):*

1. The Legislature of the State of New Jersey expresses its profound regret for the State's role in slavery and apologizes for the wrongs inflicted by slavery and its after effects in the United States of America; expresses its deepest sympathies and solemn regrets to those who were enslaved and the descendants of those slaves, who were deprived of life, human dignity, and the constitutional protections accorded all citizens of the United States; and we encourage all citizens to remember and teach their children about the history of slavery, Jim Crow laws, and modern day slavery, to ensure that these tragedies will neither be forgotten nor repeated.

2. It is the intent of the Legislature that this resolution shall not be used in, or be the basis of, any type of litigation.

3. Duly authenticated copies of this resolution, signed by the President of the Senate and Speaker of the General Assembly and attested by the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the General Assembly, shall be transmitted to the New Jersey Secretary of State, all New Jersey branches of the National Association for the Advancement for Colored People, Garden State Bar Association, the Amistad Commission, and the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education.

STATEMENT

This concurrent resolution issues a formal apology on behalf of the State of New Jersey for its role in slavery and discusses the history of racism and inhumane treatment toward African-Americans in the United States from the arrival of its first settlers to the present day. It calls upon the citizens of this State to remember that slavery continues to exist and encourages them to teach about the history and legacy of slavery and Jim Crow laws.

Exhibit H House Resolution

Whereas millions of Africans and their descendants were enslaved in the United States and the 13 American colonies from 1619 through 1865; (Engrossed as Agreed to or Passed by House)

HRES 194 EH

H. Res. 194
In the House of Representatives, U. S.,
July 29, 2008.

Whereas millions of Africans and their descendants were enslaved in the United States and the 13 American colonies from 1619 through 1865;

Whereas slavery in America resembled no other form of involuntary servitude known in history, as Africans were captured and sold at auction like inanimate objects or animals;

Whereas Africans forced into slavery were brutalized, humiliated, dehumanized, and subjected to the indignity of being stripped of their names and heritage;

Whereas enslaved families were torn apart after having been sold separately from one another;

Whereas the system of slavery and the visceral racism against persons of African descent upon which it depended became entrenched in the Nation's social fabric;

Whereas slavery was not officially abolished until the passage of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1865 after the end of the Civil War;

Whereas after emancipation from 246 years of slavery, African-Americans soon saw the fleeting political, social, and economic gains they made during Reconstruction eviscerated by virulent racism, lynchings, disenfranchisement, Black Codes, and racial segregation laws that imposed a rigid system of officially sanctioned racial segregation in virtually all areas of life;

Whereas the system of de jure racial segregation known as `Jim Crow,' which arose in certain parts of the Nation following the Civil War to create separate and unequal societies for whites and African-Americans, was a direct result of the racism against persons of African descent engendered by slavery;

Whereas a century after the official end of slavery in America, Federal action was required during the 1960s to eliminate the dejure and defacto system of Jim Crow throughout parts of the Nation, though its vestiges still linger to this day;

Whereas African-Americans continue to suffer from the complex interplay between slavery and Jim Crow--long after both systems were formally abolished--through

enormous damage and loss, both tangible and intangible, including the loss of human dignity, the frustration of careers and professional lives, and the long-term loss of income and opportunity;

Whereas the story of the enslavement and de jure segregation of African-Americans and the dehumanizing atrocities committed against them should not be purged from or minimized in the telling of American history;

Whereas on July 8, 2003, during a trip to Goree Island, Senegal, a former slave port, President George W. Bush acknowledged slavery's continuing legacy in American life and the need to confront that legacy when he stated that slavery `was . . . one of the greatest crimes of history . . . The racial bigotry fed by slavery did not end with slavery or with segregation. And many of the issues that still trouble America have roots in the bitter experience of other times. But however long the journey, our destiny is set: liberty and justice for all.';

Whereas President Bill Clinton also acknowledged the deep-seated problems caused by the continuing legacy of racism against African-Americans that began with slavery when he initiated a national dialogue about race;

Whereas a genuine apology is an important and necessary first step in the process of racial reconciliation;

Whereas an apology for centuries of brutal dehumanization and injustices cannot erase the past, but confession of the wrongs committed can speed racial healing and reconciliation and help Americans confront the ghosts of their past;

Whereas the legislature of the Commonwealth of Virginia has recently taken the lead in adopting a resolution officially expressing appropriate remorse for slavery and other State legislatures have adopted or are considering similar resolutions; and

Whereas it is important for this country, which legally recognized slavery through its Constitution and its laws, to make a formal apology for slavery and for its successor, Jim Crow, so that it can move forward and seek reconciliation, justice, and harmony for all of its citizens: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives--

(1) acknowledges that slavery is incompatible with the basic founding principles recognized in the Declaration of Independence that all men are created equal;

(2) acknowledges the fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery and Jim Crow;

(3) apologizes to African Americans on behalf of the people of the United States, for the wrongs committed against them and their ancestors who suffered under slavery and Jim Crow; and

(4) expresses its commitment to rectify the lingering consequences of the misdeeds committed against African Americans under slavery

and Jim Crow and to stop the occurrence of human rights violations in the future.

Attest:

Clerk.

Exhibit I Senate Resolution

AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. CON. RES. 26

Apologizing for the enslavement and racial segregation of African-Americans.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 11, 2009

Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. BOND, and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was ordered held at the desk

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CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Apologizing for the enslavement and racial segregation of African-Americans.

Whereas, during the history of the Nation, the United States has grown into a symbol of democracy and freedom around the world;

Whereas the legacy of African-Americans is interwoven with the very fabric of the democracy and freedom of the United States;

Whereas millions of Africans and their descendants were enslaved in the United States and the 13 American colonies from 1619 through 1865;

Whereas Africans forced into slavery were brutalized, humiliated, dehumanized, and subjected to the indignity of being stripped of their names and heritage;

Whereas many enslaved families were torn apart after family members were sold separately;

Whereas the system of slavery and the visceral racism against people of African descent upon which it depended became enmeshed in the social fabric of the United States;

Whereas slavery was not officially abolished until the ratification of the 13th amendment to the Constitution of the United States in 1865, after the end of the Civil War;

Whereas after emancipation from 246 years of slavery, African-Americans soon saw the fleeting political, social, and economic gains they made during Reconstruction eviscerated by virulent racism, lynchings, disenfranchisement, Black Codes, and racial segregation laws that imposed a rigid system of officially sanctioned racial segregation in virtually all areas of life;

Whereas the system of de jure racial segregation known as "Jim Crow", which arose in certain parts of the United States after the Civil War to create separate and unequal societies for Whites and African-Americans, was a direct result of the racism against people of African descent that was engendered by slavery;

Whereas the system of Jim Crow laws officially existed until the 1960s—a century after the official end of slavery in the United States—until Congress took action to end it, but the vestiges of Jim Crow continue to this day;

Whereas African-Americans continue to suffer from the consequences of slavery and Jim Crow laws—long after both systems were formally abolished—through enormous damage and loss, both tangible and intangible, including the loss of human dignity and liberty;

Whereas the story of the enslavement and de jure segregation of African-Americans and the dehumanizing atrocities committed against them should not be purged from or minimized in the telling of the history of the United States;

Whereas those African-Americans who suffered under slavery and Jim Crow laws, and their descendants, exemplify the strength of the human character and provide a model of courage, commitment, and perseverance;

Whereas, on July 8, 2003, during a trip to Goree Island, Senegal, a former slave port, President George W. Bush acknowledged the continuing legacy of slavery in life in the United States and the need to confront that legacy, when he stated that slavery "was . . . one of the greatest crimes of history . . . The racial bigotry fed by slavery did not end with slavery or with segregation. And many of the issues that still trouble America have roots in the bitter experience of other times. But however long the journey, our destiny is set: liberty and justice for all.";

Whereas President Bill Clinton also acknowledged the deep-seated problems caused by the continuing legacy of racism against African-Americans that began with slavery, when he initiated a national dialogue about race;

Whereas an apology for centuries of brutal dehumanization and injustices cannot erase the past, but confession of the wrongs committed and a formal apology to African-Americans will help bind the wounds of the Nation that are rooted in slavery and can speed racial healing and reconciliation and help the people of the United States understand the past and honor the history of all people of the United States;

Whereas the legislatures of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the States of Alabama, Florida, Maryland, and North Carolina have taken the lead in adopting resolutions officially expressing appropriate remorse for slavery, and other State legislatures are considering similar resolutions; and

Whereas it is important for the people of the United States, who legally recognized slavery through the Constitution and the laws of the United States, to make a formal apology for slavery and for its successor, Jim Crow, so they can move forward and seek reconciliation, justice, and harmony for all people of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That the sense of the Congress is the following:

(1) APOLOGY FOR THE ENSLAVEMENT AND SEGREGATION OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS.—The Congress—

(A) acknowledges the fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery and Jim Crow laws;

(B) apologizes to African-Americans on behalf of the people of the United States, for the wrongs committed against them and their ancestors who suffered under slavery and Jim Crow laws; and

(C) expresses its recommitment to the principle that all people are created equal and endowed with inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and calls on all people of the United States to work toward eliminating racial prejudices, injustices, and discrimination from our society.

(2) DISCLAIMER.—Nothing in this resolution—

(A) authorizes or supports any claim against the United States; or

(B) serves as a settlement of any claim against the United States.

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