



HR0625

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, Most of us, as school children, are taught the  
3 story that Francis Scott Key wrote the Star-Spangled Banner,  
4 our National Anthem, while a prisoner aboard a British ship  
5 during the War of 1812 as he watched American troops attempting  
6 to hold off the invading British; and

7           WHEREAS, Today, the Star-Spangled Banner is a song that  
8 instills pride in millions of Americans every time it is sung;  
9 and

10           WHEREAS, The version of the Star-Spangled Banner that most  
11 Americans are familiar with makes no mention of the black  
12 soldiers that shed blood and lost their lives fighting to keep  
13 the American flag flying over Baltimore, Maryland; and

14           WHEREAS, Most Americans are not aware that what would  
15 become our National Anthem contained a verse that was removed  
16 before the song became popular; and

17           WHEREAS, Francis Scott Key held derogatory views towards  
18 African Americans and the missing verse was removed because it  
19 was feared that it could be misconstrued as racist; and

20           WHEREAS, The missing verse: "And where is that band who so

1 vauntingly swore, that the havoc of war and the battle's  
2 confusion a home and a Country should leave us no more? Their  
3 blood has wash'd out their foul footstep's pollution. No refuge  
4 could save the hireling and slave from the terror of flight or  
5 the gloom of the grave, and the star-spangled banner in triumph  
6 doth wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave";  
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Francis Scott Key aggressively worked to  
9 repatriate enslaved Africans back to the continent of Africa,  
10 because he believed, in agreement with the words of Thomas  
11 Jefferson, that Africans could never coexist with white  
12 Americans because of the "deep rooted prejudices entertained by  
13 the whites; ten thousand recollections, by the blacks of the  
14 injuries they have sustained; new provocations; the real  
15 distinctions which nature has made; and many other  
16 circumstances ... will produce convulsions which will never end  
17 but in the extermination of the one or the other race"; and

18 WHEREAS, The vacancies in the stories told about our  
19 collective history must be filled in with every honest and  
20 humble effort, so that our citizens are able to face the  
21 complex emotions and disturbing facts that feed so much anger  
22 and confusion and threats which are obstacles to our advancing  
23 in the cause of justice and lasting peace; and

1           WHEREAS, Teachers and scholars are available throughout  
2           our State to assist young and old alike to build a base of  
3           knowledge that can bring minds and hearts to a common  
4           understanding of what still remains as our Constitutional  
5           imperative, to establish a more perfect union; therefore, be it

6           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
7           HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
8           encourage all citizens to familiarize themselves with the  
9           original lyrics of the Star-Spangled Banner.