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LRB102 03820 LAW 13834 r

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, With the adoption and ratification of the 13th
3 Amendment 155 years ago, the practice of slavery formally
4 ended in the United States, but it did not strip away all
5 aspects of involuntary servitude; and

6 WHEREAS, Lawmakers in Congress are pushing to remove the
7 so-called slavery loophole from the U.S. Constitution, a
8 loophole which has been exploited to criminalize and
9 incarcerate Black and Brown Americans; and

10 WHEREAS, A joint resolution dubbed the Abolition Amendment
11 seeks to remove the "punishment" clause from the amendment,
12 which effectively allows members of prison populations to be
13 used as cheap and free labor; and

14 WHEREAS, Prison labor has been a part of the U.S. economy
15 since at least the late 19th century; and

16 WHEREAS, Reliance on prison labor is generally touted as a
17 way to rehabilitate inmates and provide an environment for
18 teaching them new trade skills; inmates make little to no
19 money for their efforts; and

20 WHEREAS, According to the nonprofit Prison Policy

1 Initiative, the minimum estimated annual value of incarcerated
2 labor from U.S. prisons and jails is \$2 billion; and

3 WHEREAS, In July 2020, NPR reported that companies,
4 including Walmart, AT&T, Whole Foods, and Victoria's Secret,
5 have used incarcerated populations for their business
6 operations; and

7 WHEREAS, No American should ever be subject to involuntary
8 servitude, even if they are incarcerated; and

9 WHEREAS, Ending the slavery loophole in the 13th Amendment
10 would be a critical step towards taking on the long and
11 difficult challenge of rooting out systemic racism in our
12 nation; therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
14 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
15 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we support the passing of the
16 Abolition Amendment by Congress; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That suitable copies be delivered to all members
18 of the President, the U.S. Senate Majority Leader, the U.S.
19 Senate Minority Leader, the U.S. Speaker of the House, the
20 U.S. House of Representatives Minority Leader, and all members
21 of the Illinois Congressional Delegation.