



HJ0014

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1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Approximately 4,000,000 Africans and their  
3 descendants were enslaved in the United States and colonies  
4 that became the United States from 1619 to 1865; and

5 WHEREAS, The institution of slavery was constitutionally  
6 and statutorily sanctioned by the Government of the United  
7 States from 1789 through 1865; and

8 WHEREAS, The slavery that flourished in the United States  
9 constituted an immoral and inhumane deprivation of Africans'  
10 life, liberty, African citizenship rights, and cultural  
11 heritage, and denied them the fruits of their own labor; and

12 WHEREAS, Sufficient inquiry has not been made into the  
13 effects of the institution of slavery on living  
14 African-Americans and society in the United States; therefore,  
15 be it

16 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
17 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
18 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that there is established the  
19 Commission to Study the Transatlantic Slave Trade and its Past  
20 and Present Effects on African-Americans (hereinafter referred  
21 to as the Commission); and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That the Commission shall perform the following  
2 duties:

3           (1) Examine the institution of slavery which existed  
4 within the United States and the colonies that became the  
5 United States from 1619 through 1865; the Commission's  
6 examination shall include an examination of:

7                   (A) the capture and procurement of Africans;

8                   (B) the transport of Africans to the United States  
9 and the colonies that became the United States for the  
10 purpose of enslavement, including their treatment  
11 during transport;

12                   (C) the sale and acquisition of Africans as chattel  
13 property in interstate and intrastate commerce; and

14                   (D) the treatment of African slaves in the colonies  
15 and the United States, including the deprivation of  
16 their freedom, exploitation of their labor, and  
17 destruction of their culture, language, religion, and  
18 families;

19           (2) Examine the extent to which the Federal and State  
20 governments of the United States supported the institution  
21 of slavery in constitutional and statutory provisions,  
22 including the extent to which such governments prevented,  
23 opposed, or restricted efforts of freed African slaves to  
24 repatriate to their homeland;

25           (3) Examine Federal and State laws that discriminated  
26 against freed African slaves and their descendants during

1 the period between the end of the Civil War and the  
2 present;

3 (4) Examine other forms of discrimination in the public  
4 and private sectors against freed African slaves and their  
5 descendants during the period between the end of the Civil  
6 War and the present;

7 (5) Examine the lingering negative effects of the  
8 institution of slavery and the matters described in  
9 paragraphs (1), (2), (3), and (4) on living  
10 African-Americans and on society in the United States;

11 (6) Recommend appropriate ways to educate the general  
12 public of the Commission's findings;

13 (7) Examine whether African-Americans still suffer  
14 from the lingering effects of the matters described in  
15 paragraphs (1), (2), (3), and (4); and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the members of the Commission shall include  
17 the President of the Senate or his or her designee and the  
18 Speaker of the House of Representatives or his or her designee,  
19 each serving as co-chairpersons, the Governor or his or her  
20 designee, one vice-chairperson appointed by each of the  
21 co-chairpersons, and 25 appointed members, with the Governor,  
22 the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of  
23 Representatives, the Minority Leader of the Senate, and the  
24 Minority Leader of the House of Representatives appointing 5  
25 members each; and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That the appointed members shall be from diverse  
2 backgrounds so as to reflect the diverse citizenry of Illinois  
3 working together, and that their individual qualifications  
4 shall include varying educational, professional, and civic  
5 experiences that bring different perspectives and cooperative  
6 outlooks to the Commission; and be it further

7           RESOLVED, That the Commission shall broaden outreach by  
8 using established channels, including publicly-supported media  
9 and electronic, computer-assisted communication systems, and  
10 elicit voluntary assistance from educational, legal, civic,  
11 and professional organizations and institutions as well as  
12 notable individuals; and be it further

13           RESOLVED, That no later than December 31, 2008, the  
14 Commission shall report to the General Assembly, the Governor,  
15 and the general public on its activities, accomplishments, and  
16 recommendations; and that the Commission shall be dissolved  
17 after the filing of this report; and be it further

18           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
19 delivered to the Governor of the State of Illinois.