



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

RESOLUTION NO. 210144

Introduced February 18, 2021

Councilmember Johnson

RESOLUTION

Calling on Congress to pass the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act.

WHEREAS, H.R. 40, also known as the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act, seeks to examine the fundamental injustice of slavery perpetuated in the United States for over 200 years until 1865, and consider options for reparations; and

WHEREAS, The fight for H.R. 40 has a long history in the House of Representatives, championed for decades by the late Rep. John Conyers. Its current champions include lead sponsors Representative Sheila Jackson Lee in the House and Senator Cory Booker, who introduced the companion bill S.40 in the U.S. Senate; and

WHEREAS, On Wednesday, February 17th, the U.S. House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties heard testimony on this historic bill, appropriately taking place during Black History Month; and

WHEREAS, The reparations commission that the bill seeks to establish would study the history of slavery, the role federal and state governments played in supporting slavery, and racial discrimination against the descendants of enslaved Africans; and

WHEREAS, The commission would be able to make recommendations regarding compensation and atonement for slavery. This is an essential step in the reconciliation for the sin of American slavery and better understanding of its lasting effects; and

WHEREAS, This legislation is already supported by numerous prominent organization including the Human Rights Watch, the ACLU, Amnesty International, Asians Americans Advancing Justice and the NAACP; and

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WHEREAS, Following a year where racial injustice was at the forefront of national conversation, continued actions need to be taken in order for the federal government to begin to make amends for the historic state-sponsored violence against Black people, and the decades of systemic racial discrimination that followed; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby calls on Congress to pass H.R. 40, the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act.