

106TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. CON. RES. 356

Acknowledging the fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery in the United States and the 13 American colonies, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 19, 2000

Mr. HALL of Ohio (for himself, Mr. BONIOR, Ms. CARSON, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. COBURN, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. RUSH, Mr. TRAFICANT, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. LEE, and Ms. KAPTUR) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Judiciary

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## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Acknowledging the fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery in the United States and the 13 American colonies, and for other purposes.

Whereas approximately 4,000,000 Africans and their descendants were enslaved in the United States and the 13 American colonies in the period 1619 through 1865;

Whereas slavery was a grave injustice that caused and continues to cause African-Americans to suffer enormous damages and losses, both material and intangible, including the loss of human dignity and liberty, the frustration

of careers and professional lives, and the long-term loss of income and opportunity;

Whereas slavery in the United States denied African-Americans the fruits of their own labor and was an immoral and inhumane deprivation of life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, citizenship rights, and cultural heritage;

Whereas, although the achievements of African-Americans in overcoming the evils of slavery stand as a source of tremendous inspiration, the successes of slaves and their descendants do not overwrite the failure of the Nation to grant all Americans their birthright of equality and the civil rights that safeguard freedom;

Whereas an apology is an important and necessary step in the process of racial reconciliation, because a sincere apology accompanied by an attempt at real restitution is an important healing interaction;

Whereas a genuine apology may restore damaged relationships, whether they are between 2 people or between groups of people;

Whereas African-American art, history, and culture reflects experiences of slavery and freedom, and continued struggles for full recognition of citizenship and treatment with human dignity, and there is inadequate presentation, preservation, and recognition of the contributions of African-Americans within American society;

Whereas there is a great need for building institutions and monuments to promote cultural understanding of African-American heritage and further enhance racial harmony; and

Whereas it is proper and timely for the Congress to recognize June 19, 1865, the historic day when the last group of

slaves were informed of their freedom, to acknowledge the historic significance of the abolition of slavery, to express deep regret to African-Americans, and to support reconciliation efforts: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*  
2 *concurring), That—*

3           (1) the Congress—

4               (A) acknowledges the fundamental injus-  
5               tice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slav-  
6               ery in the United States and the 13 American  
7               colonies;

8               (B) apologizes to African-Americans on be-  
9               half of the people of the United States, for the  
10              wrongs committed against their ancestors who  
11              suffered as slaves;

12              (C) expresses condemnation of and repudi-  
13              ates the gross and wanton excesses perpetrated  
14              against African-Americans while the institution  
15              of slavery existed;

16              (D) recognizes the Nation's need to redress  
17              these events;

18              (E) commends efforts of reconciliation ini-  
19              tiated by organizations and individuals con-  
20              cerned about civil rights and civil liberties and  
21              calls for a national initiative of reconciliation  
22              among the races; and

1 (F) expresses commitment to rectify mis-  
2 deeds of slavery done in the past and to dis-  
3 courage the occurrence of human rights viola-  
4 tions in the future; and

5 (2) it is the sense of the Congress that—

6 (A) a commission should be established—

7 (i) to examine the institution of slav-  
8 ery, subsequent racial and economic dis-  
9 crimination against African-Americans as  
10 a matter of law and as a matter of fact,  
11 and the impact of slavery and such dis-  
12 crimination on living African-Americans;

13 (ii) to issue a standardized, historical  
14 curriculum for use in public schools on the  
15 institution of slavery in the United States;  
16 and

17 (iii) to explore the possibility of estab-  
18 lishing a scholarship and research fund;  
19 and

20 (B) a National museum and memorial  
21 should be established regarding slavery as it re-  
22 lates to the history of the United States, and  
23 other significant African-American history.

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