

**R007-0405**

10     **A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE**  
20     **URGING OF CONGRESS TO PASS HR 40 A BILL THAT WOULD**  
30     **CREATE A COMMISSION STUDYING THE EFFECTS OF SLAVERY**

40     **WHEREAS:**     In 1989 and every subsequent year after, Representative John Conyers, Jr. has  
50                     introduced H.R. 40 into the House of Representatives; and,

60     **WHEREAS:**     The federal government should undertake an official study of the impact of  
70                     slavery on the social, political and economic life of our nation; and,

80     **WHEREAS:**     Over 4 million Africans and their descendants were enslaved in the United  
90                     States and its colonies from 1619 to 1865, and as a result, the United States was  
100                    able to begin its grand place as the most prosperous country in the free world;  
110                    and,

120    **WHEREAS:**     The commission would make recommendations to Congress on appropriate  
130                     remedies to redress the harm inflicted on living African Americans; and,

140    **WHEREAS:**     The commission established would also shed light on the capture and  
150                     procurement of slaves, the transport and sale of slaves, the treatment of slaves in  
160                     the colonies and in the United States; and,

170    **WHEREAS:**     It would examine the extent to which Federal and State governments in the U.S.  
180                     supported the institution of slavery and examine federal and state laws that  
190                     discriminated against freed African slaves from the end of the Civil War to the  
200                     present; and,

210    **WHEREAS:**     Many of the most pressing issues, which have heretofore not been broached on  
220                     any broad scale, would be addressed; and,

230    **WHEREAS:**     For example, the issue such as the lingering negative effects of the institution of  
240                     slavery; and,

250    **WHEREAS:**     H.R. 40 has strong grass roots support within the African American community,  
260                     including major civil rights organizations, religious organizations, academic and  
270                     civic groups from across the country; and,

280    **WHEREAS:**     This support is very similar to the strong grassroots support that proceeded  
290                     another legislative initiative: the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday; and,

300    **WHEREAS:**     H.R. 40 has over 40 cosponsors in the House of Representatives; and,

310    **WHEREAS:**     The city councils in Detroit, Cleveland, Chicago, and Atlanta have passed bills  
320                     supporting H.R. 40 and the State of Maryland has introduced legislation in the  
330                     MGA to support H.R. 40; and,

340    **WHEREAS:**     It is a fact that slavery flourished in the United States and constituted an  
350                     immoral and inhumane deprivation of African slaves' lives, liberty and cultural  
360                     heritage; and,

370    **WHEREAS:**     The State of Maryland has established a commission to coordinate the study  
380                     and this commission is designed to determine the “commemoration and impact  
390                     of slavery’s history and legacy in Maryland; and,

400 **WHEREAS:** President Bush signed into public law HR 3491, which establishes within  
410 the Smithsonian Institution, The National Museum of African-American History  
420 and Culture, which will operate as a location for public education, exhibits,  
430 collection and study items, materials relating to the life, art, history and culture  
440 of African-Americans that encompass the period of slavery, the era of  
450 Reconstruction, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Civil Rights Movement as  
460 well as other periods of African-American history; and,

470 **WHEREAS:** In the interest of education and encouraging public awareness of the experiences  
480 and contributions of African-Americans, many of which the American public as  
490 a whole are unaware of and are unknown to the vast majority of American  
500 people, Congress should pass HR 40 and the President should sign it into law.

510 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature urges the  
520 Congress of the United States to pass H.R. 40; and,

530 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature urges President Bush  
540 to sign into law H.R. 40 when passed by the Congress of the United States.  
550

560 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature commends the State of  
570 Maryland on its attempts to further educate the public about African-American  
580 history; and,

590 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature commends President  
600 George W. Bush for his part in encouraging such awareness by signing HR 3491  
610 into public law on December 16, 2003.

620 **MANDATES:** Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist  
630 Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle  
640 Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert  
650 House Majority Leader Tom DeLay  
660 House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi  
670 President George W. Bush  
680 Vice President Dick Cheney  
690 Representative John Conyers, Jr.

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