

R021-0607

10 **A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE STATUE OF FORMER CHIEF JUSTICE**
20 **ROGER B. TANEY ON THE GROUNDS OF THE MARYLAND STATE HOUSE**

30 **WHEREAS:** A statue of Maryland native and 5th Chief Justice of the United States,
40 Roger B. Taney, currently lies on the grounds of the Maryland State
50 House; and,

60 **WHEREAS:** Chief Justice Taney, who served between 1836 and 1864 authored the
70 majority opinion in the *Dred Scott v. Sanford* case; and,

80 **WHEREAS:** The Dred Scott Decision held that people of African descent could
90 never be citizens of the United States, even if they were not slaves, and
100 that Congress had no authority to prohibit slavery in the federal
110 territories; and,

120 **WHEREAS:** Chief Justice Taney wrote that African-Americans were "beings of an
130 inferior order, and altogether unfit to associate with the white race,
140 either in social or political relations, and so far inferior that they had no
150 rights which the white man was bound to respect." and,

160 **WHEREAS:** The Dred Scott Decision is often considered one of the worst in the
170 Supreme Court's history; and,

180 **WHEREAS:** Former Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes wrote that the Dred Scott
190 decision was a painful wound from which it took the Court a generation
200 to recover; and,

210 **WHEREAS:** In rejecting a proposal to commission a bust of Taney, former Senator
220 Charles Sumner said, "I speak what cannot be denied when I declare
230 that the opinion of the Chief Justice in the case of Dred Scott was more
240 thoroughly abominable than anything of the kind in the history of
250 courts. Judicial baseness reached its lowest point on that occasion. You
260 have not forgotten that terrible decision where a most unrighteous
270 judgment was sustained by a falsification of history." and,

280 **WHEREAS:** The opinions put forth by Chief Justice Taney reflect neither a fair and
290 reasoned judgment of the law, nor the values of the citizens of the great
300 State of Maryland.

310 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature urges the
320 government of Maryland to remove the statue of Roger B. Taney from
330 the grounds of the State House.

340 **MANDATES:** Martin J. O'Malley, Governor of Maryland
350 Anthony G. Brown, Lieutenant Governor of Maryland
360 Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate
370 Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates

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