

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 4

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By: **Delegates Vaughn, Barnes, Branch, Davis, Healey, Hixson, Holmes, Ivey, Levi, Niemann, Oaks, Ross, Valderrama, Vallario, and Walker**

Introduced and read first time: February 23, 2007

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

Committee Report: Favorable

House action: Adopted with floor amendments

Read second time: March 21, 2007

RESOLUTION NO. _____

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Slavery in Maryland**

3 FOR the purpose of expressing regret for the role that Maryland played in instituting
4 and maintaining slavery and for the discrimination that was slavery's legacy.

5 WHEREAS, The State of Maryland relied on slavery for 200 years; and

6 WHEREAS, To meet the needs of its economy, Maryland prior to 1808 imported
7 men, women, and children, torn from their homes in Africa and subjected to the
8 brutality of the Middle Passage; and

9 WHEREAS, Maryland citizens trafficked in human flesh until the adoption of
10 the Constitution of 1864; and

11 WHEREAS, Slavery subjected its victims to unspeakable cruelties, including
12 beatings, rape, and the forcible separation of family members from one another; and

13 WHEREAS, A native of Maryland, nurtured by the slave culture of our State,
14 wrote the Supreme Court's Dred Scott decision declaring African Americans incapable
15 of citizenship because they had "no rights which the white man was bound to respect";
16 and

EXPLANATION:

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken by amendment.



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1 WHEREAS, Slavery fostered a climate of oppression not only for slaves and
2 their descendants but also for people of color who moved to Maryland subsequent to
3 slavery's abolition; and

4 WHEREAS, Slavery's legacy has afflicted the citizens of our State down to the
5 present; and

6 WHEREAS, Slavery and discrimination are utterly contrary to the principles
7 that this Nation and this State profess; and

8 WHEREAS, It is time for the State of Maryland to acknowledge the role the
9 State played in maintaining the institution of slavery and its attendant evils; now,
10 therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the State
12 of Maryland expresses profound regret for the role that Maryland played in instituting
13 and maintaining slavery and for the discrimination that was slavery's legacy; and be it
14 further

15 RESOLVED, That the State of Maryland commits itself to the formation of a
16 more perfect union among its citizens regardless of color, creed, or race; and be it
17 further

18 RESOLVED, That the State of Maryland recommit itself to the principle that
19 all people ~~are equal and equally endowed with inalienable rights to life, liberty, and~~
20 ~~the pursuit of happiness.~~ "are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator
21 with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of
22 Happiness."

Approved:

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.