



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0664-2015, **Version:** A

Res. No. 664-A

Resolution calling upon the United States Congress and the New York State Legislature to pass and the President of the United States and Governor of the State of New York to sign, legislation to establish October 9th annually, as Haitian Day in recognition of the historic contributions of Haitians to the United States of America

By Council Members Eugene, Cabrera, Gibson, Koo, Richards, Rose, Rosenthal, Grodenchik, Levin and Menchaca

Whereas, Haitians have made great contributions to the United States of America throughout the nation's history, from major achievements in athletics, art, music and culture, to social advancement for persons of African descent to leadership in elected offices from the local to the national level; and

Whereas, In 1770, Jean Baptiste Point du Sable, an American revolutionary, born on the portion of the island now known as Haiti, became the founder of Chicago by becoming the first person to live in the city's limits at the mouth of the Chicago River; and

Whereas, Monsieur du Sable now has a school, museum, park, harbor and bridge named in his honor, with the place he settled recognized as a National Historic Landmark; and

Whereas, In 1779, Haitian soldiers fought for American Independence in the Revolutionary War at the Battle of Savannah and have since been honored by a monument in the State of Georgia; and

Whereas, On October 9, 1779 more than 500 recruits from Saint-Domingue, a French colony which later became Haiti, fought alongside American colonial troops against the British Army during the siege of Savannah, one of the most significant foreign contributions to the Revolutionary War; and

Whereas, In 1803, France was forced to sell Louisiana and associated lands as a result of the revolution

taking place in Haiti led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, thereby greatly increasing the land owned by the United States; and

Whereas, Haitian philanthropist and freed slave, Pierre Toussaint contributed personal funds and helped to raise money for Saint Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan, New York, for which he was Venerated by the Catholic Church in 1996; and

Whereas, Brooklyn born architects of Haitian descent, Nicole Hollant-Denis and Rodney Leon, have designed several New York buildings and sites of significance including the African Burial Ground Memorial in lower Manhattan and Leon's "Arc of Return," a permanent memorial at the United Nations dedicated to the victims of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade; and

Whereas, According to the 2009 United States Census, there are over 830,000 persons of Haitian descent living in the United States today; and

Whereas, According to the 2009 United States Census, there are over 191,000 persons of Haitian descent living in New York State today, with 140,000 living in New York City, which maintains the largest concentration of Haitians in the country; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Congress and the New York State Legislature to pass and the President of the United States and the Governor of the State of New York to sign, legislation to establish October 9th annually, as Haitian Day in recognition of the historic contributions of Haitians to the United States of America.

RM/ACK
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