



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0056-2004, **Version:** *

Res. No. 56

Resolution calling upon the State Legislature to enact Assembly Bill A5329, acknowledging the tragedy of slavery in New York State, and to establish a commemorative day to pay tribute to persons enslaved in this State.

By Council Members Perkins, Barron, Sanders, Gerson, Stewart, Boyland, Clarke and Reed

Whereas, For more than two hundred years, slavery existed in what became New York State; and

Whereas, The government of New York State not only legalized the enslavement of Africans and their descendants, but also enacted “slave codes,” taxes on the sale of enslaved persons and fines payable to the local government or poor house administrators for violations of the “slave codes”; and

Whereas, Chapter 137 of New York’s laws of 1817 provided for the gradual emancipation of enslaved persons by July 4, 1827; and

Whereas, Yet, this same statute also provided penalties for harboring an enslaved person or servant, and permitted an enslaved person to be abandoned at age 21 with certification by local government; and

Whereas, The 2002 World Conference Against Racism held in Durban, South Africa, proclaimed in its final document, “. . . slavery and the slave trade are a crime against humanity and should always have been so . . .”; and

Whereas, This bill, sponsored by Assembly Member Roger L. Green of Brooklyn, seeks to have the State, as the government of New York, apologize for New York’s role in the enslavement of Africans and their descendants; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council calls upon the State Legislature to enact Assembly Bill A5329, acknowledging the tragedy of slavery in New York State, and to establish a commemorative day to pay tribute to persons enslaved in this State.