



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0128-2004, **Version:** *

Res. No. 128

Resolution urging the establishment of a Commission on Queen Mother Moore Reparations for Descendants of Africans of New York City.

By Council Members Barron, Perkins, Liu, Foster, Sanders Jr., Seabrook, Martinez, Jackson, Rivera, Quinn, Vann and Monserrate

Whereas, In 1625 the Dutch established the village of New Amsterdam on Manhattan Island and began the wholesale kidnapping and enslavement of African people from the Caribbean and Africa; and

Whereas, African laborers in 1639 worked daily in Manhattan Islands' Northern Forest (Upper East Side and Harlem) clearing timber and cutting lumber at the Colony's Sawmill (74th Street and Second Avenue); and

Whereas, These Africans also built farms beyond New Amsterdam, ie. (Staten Island, Brooklyn and Queens); and

Whereas, In 1664 the English won control of New Amsterdam and renamed it New York after the Duke of York, and continued the wholesale thievery of African people from the Caribbean and Africa; and

Whereas, These Africans were forced to provide "Free Labor" to New York City under British rule that was even more aggressive and cruel in its participation in the so-called Transatlantic slave trade; the greatest crime committed against humanity; and

Whereas, These Africans during New York City's colonial period of enslavement, cleared land, built houses, paved roads, built forts and bridges, planted and harvested crops; and

Whereas, The enslavement of Africans continued in New York City after the colonial period when the United States ratified its constitution in 1789 and became the United States of America, until New York City abolished slavery in the 1840's; and

Whereas, In short, Africans built New York City's infrastructure and economy and were never paid; and

Whereas, Not only were these Africans never paid, they were subjected to the worse kind of rape, torture, brutality and murder the human mind can conjure up; and

Whereas, Evidence of this cruelty can be validated by the over 20,000 African ancestral remains located in downtown Manhattan, particularly 427 of those African ancestral remains that have been excavated from the African Burial Ground located on Duane and Reade Streets; and

Whereas, These Africans are now represented by over 2.1 million people of African ancestry in New York City; and

Whereas, Queen Mother Moore, born Audley F. Moore on July 27th, 1898, and passed on to be with the ancestors on May 2nd, 1997, spent seventy-seven years of her life fighting for Human Rights, Civil Rights, Liberation, Black Nationalism and Reparations for African People; and

Whereas, Queen Mother Moore spent decades of her struggle fighting in Harlem, New York City; and

Whereas, In the early 1960's, Queen Mother Moore formed "The Reparations Committee of Descendants of United States Slaves" to demand Reparations for Africans in America from the U.S. Government. She canvassed the country to get over a million signatures to petition the government and was successful in presenting the signatures to President John F. Kennedy; and

Whereas, Queen Mother Moore continued the struggle of I.H. Dickerson and Callie House, who engaged in one of the earliest calls for Reparations when they established the "Ex-Slaves Pension Movement" from 1890 to 1920; and

Whereas, Queen Mother Moore joined many other Africans in America in the fight for Reparations, such as; Marcus Mosiah Garvey, Malcolm X., Martin Luther King Jr., The Republic of New Africa, The National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA), The December 12th Movement, The Black Radical Congress, The Patrice Lumumba Coalition, United African Movement, National Action Network, The Black United Front, The Unity Party and countless others; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That a "Queen Mother Moore" Reparations for Descendants of Africans of New York City Commission be established; and further

Resolved, That this Queen Mother Moore Reparations Commission be created by individuals and organizations of the New African Community of New York City in conjunction with the Black and Latino Caucus of the City Council; and further

Resolved, That the Queen Mother Moore Reparations Commission be funded by the City of New York for the duration of time deemed necessary by the Commission to hold hearings, conduct research and recommend compensation to the New African Descendant Community of New York City for the debt owed for the enslavement of their African Ancestors during the colonial and post-colonial periods in New York City.