



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 745

Resolution calling upon the State Legislature to enact Assembly Bill A273, which acknowledges the tragedy of slavery in New York State and establishes a commemorative day to pay tribute to persons enslaved in this State.

By Council Members Foster, Dickens, Mealy, Palma, Sanders Jr., Seabrook and Liu

Whereas, Slavery existed in colonial New York and New York State for more than two hundred years; and

Whereas, New York's government not only permitted 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 "slave code" violations; 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, This same statute proved less than wholly altruistic, instituting penalties for harboring an enslaved person or servant and permitting abandonment of an enslaved person upon reaching age twenty-one; and

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

Whereas, Assembly Bill A273, sponsored by Assembly Member Keith Wright of Manhattan, would have the State, as the government of New York, formally 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 A273, which acknowledges the tragedy of slavery in New York State and establishes a commemorative day to pay tribute to persons enslaved in this State.

BRS
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