

## **Resolution**

Calling on Congress to pass the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act

**WHEREAS**, H.R. 40, also known as the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act, seeks to examine the fundamental injustice of slavery perpetuated in the United States for over 200 years until 1865, and consider options for reparations; and

**WHEREAS**, The fight for H.R. 40 has a long history in the House of Representatives, championed for decades by the late Rep. John Conyers. Its current champions include lead sponsors Representative Sheila Jackson Lee in the House and Senator Cory Booker, who introduced the companion bill S.40 in the U.S. Senate; and

**WHEREAS**, On Wednesday, February 17th, the U.S. House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties heard testimony on this historic bill, appropriately taking place during Black History Month; and

**WHEREAS**, The reparations commission that the bill seeks to establish would study the history of slavery, the role federal and state governments played in supporting slavery, and racial discrimination against the descendants of enslaved Africans; and

**WHEREAS**, The commission would be able to make recommendations regarding compensation and atonement for slavery. This is an essential step in the reconciliation for the sin of American slavery and better understanding of its lasting effects; and

**WHEREAS**, This legislation is already supported by numerous prominent organization including the Human Rights Watch, the ACLU, Amnesty International, Asians Americans Advancing Justice and the NAACP; and

**WHEREAS**, Following a year where racial injustice was at the forefront of national conversation, continued actions need to be taken in order for the federal government to begin to make amends for the historic state-sponsored violence against Black people, and the decades of systemic racial discrimination that followed; now, therefore be it

**RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA**, That it hereby calls on Congress to pass H.R. 40, the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act.

Introduced by  
**Kenyatta Johnson**  
2<sup>nd</sup> District Councilmember  
February 18, 2021