

FIRST REGULAR SESSION  
HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR

# House Concurrent Resolution No. 26

## 94TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1438L.04C

1 **Whereas**, in 1720, Philippe Francois Renault introduced Negro slavery to Missouri  
2 when he brought 500 Negroes with him from Santa Domingo to work the lead mines in the Des  
3 Peres River section of what is now St. Louis and Jefferson Counties; and  
4

5 **Whereas**, the Missouri Compromise of 1820 resulted in Missouri being admitted  
6 as a slave state in exchange for approving the application for statehood of Maine as a free state  
7 in order to resolve a dispute involving the ban on slavery in territories north of the Ohio River  
8 enacted in 1787. Under the Missouri Compromise, slavery would be allowed in Missouri, but  
9 slavery would no longer be allowed for any future requests for statehood north of the what would  
10 become known as the Mason-Dixon Line; and  
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12 **Whereas**, in 1860, 36 counties in Missouri had 1,000 or more slaves. A series of  
13 laws, known as slave codes, were drawn up to address the slave population in Missouri. Under  
14 the territorial slave code of 1804, slaves were made personal property, and each revision of the  
15 law was drafted with this precedent in mind. The State Constitution of 1820, for example,  
16 provided that slaves were not to be emancipated "without the consent of their masters, or without  
17 paying them, before such emancipation"; and  
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19 **Whereas**, a slave was not permitted to keep a gun in Missouri. If he was caught  
20 carrying a gun, he was to receive 39 slashes and forfeit the gun. Slaves who participated in riots,  
21 attended unlawful assemblies, or who were guilty of making seditious speeches, were subject to  
22 whipping. Slaves guilty of conspiracy, rebellion, insurrection, and murder were put to death; and  
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24 **Whereas**, other laws further emphasized the disparate treatment of Blacks.  
25 Negroes or mulattoes "who should commit or attempt to commit assault upon White women  
26 would be mutilated." However, since a slave woman was chattel, a White man who raped her  
27 was only guilty of trespass on the master's property; and

28       **Whereas**, in 1825, a law was passed declaring Blacks to be incompetent as  
29 witnesses in legal cases involving Whites; and

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31       **Whereas**, in 1847, one of the harshest laws regarding slaves was enacted. In that  
32 year, an ordinance specifically prohibited the education of Negroes was passed. Anyone  
33 operating a school or teaching reading and writing to any Negro or mulatto in Missouri could be  
34 punished by a fine of not less than \$500 and up to six months in jail. This law was a direct result  
35 of an ever increasing conviction on the part of slave holders that literacy led to rebellion; and

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37       **Whereas**, even in death the races were generally separated. Usually there were  
38 "white" and "colored" cemeteries in every area of the State; and

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40       **Whereas**, throughout the slavery period in Missouri there were persons, Black and  
41 White, who advocated the abolition of slavery both locally and nationally. These abolitionists  
42 were an unpopular group in a slaveholding state because they challenged the continued existence  
43 of an institution which provided for cheap labor. Because of their deep mistrust toward persons  
44 who challenged their way of life, pro-slavery forces generally dealt severely with abolitionists;  
45 and

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47       **Whereas**, discrimination followed the Negroes into the Union Army during the  
48 Civil War. Negroes, like Whites, were promised a bounty but not until the war was over did they  
49 receive it. While White soldiers received \$13 a month, Negro soldiers were given \$10 a month.  
50 Blacks were given inferior weapons and materials, inadequate medical care, and if captured,  
51 were killed until Lincoln and Grant threatened to treat captured Confederate soldiers in a similar  
52 manner; and

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54       **Whereas**, in 1943, the Missouri Legislature rejected a civil rights bill that would  
55 have given Blacks equal access to public places, such as restaurants and theaters; and

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57       **Whereas**, in July 2003, President George W. Bush, at his visit to Goree Island  
58 (Senegal), acknowledged slavery in America as the largest migration in history, and also one of  
59 the greatest crimes of history; and

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61       **Whereas**, in his State of the Judiciary address delivered to the First Regular  
62 Session of the 94th General Assembly, Missouri Supreme Court Chief Justice Michael Wolff  
63 acknowledged the *Dred Scott* decision as one of the greatest blemishes on judicial history; and

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65       **Whereas**, in the *Dred Scott* case, Dred Scott, a slave who had lived in the free state  
66 of Illinois and the free territory of Wisconsin before moving back to the slave state of Missouri,  
67 had appealed to the United States Supreme Court in hopes of being granted his freedom. In  
68 March of 1857, the United States Supreme Court declared that all Blacks - slave as well as free -  
69 were not and could never become citizens of the United States. Since Scott was not a citizen,  
70 he had no right to sue; and

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72       **Whereas**, European and African nations have apologized for their roles in what  
73 history calls the worst holocaust of humankind, the Atlantic Slave Trade; and

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75       **Whereas**, racial reconciliation is difficult to achieve without some  
76 acknowledgment of the moral and legal injustices perpetrated upon African Americans; and

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78       **Whereas**, an apology for over 145 years of brutal injustices that occurred in  
79 Missouri cannot erase the past, but acknowledgment of the wrongs can speed racial healing and  
80 reconciliation and help African Americans and White citizens confront their collective pasts  
81 together; and

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83       **Whereas**, the story of the enslavement of Africans and their descendants, the  
84 human carnage, and the dehumanizing atrocities committed during slavery should not be  
85 removed from Missouri's history or discounted; moreover, the efforts of abolitionists in the State  
86 to end slavery, and the faith, perseverance, hope, and endless triumphs of African Americans and

87 their significant contributions to the development of this State and the nation should be  
88 embraced, celebrated, and retold for generations to come; and

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90 **Whereas**, the long-term effects of slavery for many African Americans could be  
91 assuaged and the principles espoused by the Founding Fathers would be affirmed, and great  
92 strides toward unifying all Missourians and inspiring the nation to acquiesce might be  
93 accomplished if the State of Missouri acknowledged its role in the slavery of Africans:

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95 **Now, therefore, be it resolved** that the members of the House of  
96 Representatives of the Ninety-fourth General Assembly, First Regular Session, the Senate  
97 concurring therein, hereby formally apologize for the State of Missouri's role in slavery.