

House Concurrent Resolution No. 4

101ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE PROUDIE.

1379H.011

DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

1 **WHEREAS**, Missouri was part of the 1803 Louisiana Purchase and became a state in
2 1821; and

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4 **WHEREAS**, the terms of Missouri's statehood included that Missouri would be the only
5 state north of the Mason-Dixon line that was a slave state; and

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7 **WHEREAS**, the tensions in the nation regarding racial equality, or lack thereof, have
8 played out in profound ways in the state of Missouri; and

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10 **WHEREAS**, St. Louis, being situated on the Mississippi River, was uniquely positioned
11 to be a destination for the slave trade; and

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13 **WHEREAS**, tensions of human inequality are profoundly apparent in the history of the
14 state; and

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16 **WHEREAS**, when persons with African ancestry in Missouri sued for their freedom,
17 such freedom was routinely granted; and

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19 **WHEREAS**, the tension in the nation over the issue of slavery and human inequality
20 resulted in Dred and Harriet Scott, persons with African ancestry, being denied freedom in this
21 state in a decision by the Missouri Supreme Court on March 22, 1852, and such decision was
22 affirmed by the United States Supreme Court on March 6, 1857; and

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24 **WHEREAS**, the March 22, 1852, Dred Scott decision is a negative legacy for this state
25 and antithetical to the nation's founding values, specifically the tenet that all men are created
26 equal; and

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28 **WHEREAS**, the Dred Scott decision's assertion that people of African ancestry "had for
29 more than a century before been regarded as beings of an inferior order, and altogether unfit to
30 associate with the white race, either in social or political relations; and so far inferior, that they
31 had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the negro might justly and
32 lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit" was an expression of racism and a precursor to Jim
33 Crow laws, which perpetrated over a century of injustice; and

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35 **WHEREAS**, all political power is vested in and derived from the people; and

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37 **WHEREAS**, all government of right originates from the people, is founded upon their
38 will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the whole; and

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40 **WHEREAS**, all constitutional government is intended to promote the general welfare
41 of all people; and

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43 **WHEREAS**, all persons have a natural right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;
44 and

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46 **WHEREAS**, no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without the due
47 process of law; and

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49 **WHEREAS**, all human beings are created equal and are entitled to equal rights and
50 opportunity under the law; and

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52 **WHEREAS**, Missouri will never again deny legal protection to a class of human beings
53 on the grounds that they are less than human; and

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55 **WHEREAS**, it is time to draw a line between Missouri's history, which encompassed
56 such inhumane and unfair treatment to our citizens, and the present and future Missouri, which
57 aims to be a place of equal treatment for all:

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59 **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the members of the House of
60 Representatives of the One Hundred First General Assembly, First Regular Session, the Senate
61 concurring therein, hereby condemn the March 22, 1852, Dred Scott decision issued by the
62 Missouri Supreme Court.

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64 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Chief Clerk of the Missouri House of
65 Representatives be instructed to prepare a properly inscribed copy of this resolution for the
66 Governor, the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Missouri, the justices of the Supreme Court of
67 Missouri, and the members of the Missouri Congressional delegation.

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