

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY OF ESSEX

#85

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
PROPOSED BY: ACCLAMATION

AUTHORITY FOR RESOLUTION N.J.S.A. 40:41A-38(a)  
AUTHORITY FOR ACTION C.C.E. 3:2-29(B)

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RESOLUTION SUPPORTING A711/S322 ESTABLISHING "NEW JERSEY REPARATIONS TASK FORCE"

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WHEREAS, from 1619 to 1865, approximately 4,000,000 Africans and their descendants, under a practice that was constitutionally and statutorily sanctioned, were enslaved in the United States and the colonies that became the United States; and

WHEREAS, the system of slavery that flourished in the United States constituted an immoral, shameful, and inhumane deprivation of the life, liberty, humanity, citizenship, and cultural heritage of Africans and also denied them, among other things, the fruits of their own labor upon which this country, and its economy, was built; and

WHEREAS, Although New Jersey outlawed the importation of enslaved Africans in 1786 and enacted a law in 1804 to abolish slavery gradually, the State Legislature passed "Peace Resolutions" in 1863 denying President Lincoln's power to emancipate slaves and later voted against the 13th amendment to the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, while many Northern states abolished slavery following the Civil War, New Jersey opposed the Emancipation Proclamation and was the last Northern state to abolish slavery. Following the Civil War, New Jersey refused to ratify the Reconstruction Amendments; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's deep roots in American slavery and its vestiges have endured to the present day. A direct line can be traced from New Jersey's role in American slavery to its system today of voter suppression, racial wealth disparities, mass incarceration, racial segregation, and crumbling infrastructure in Black communities in New Jersey, such as the current elevated lead levels in water and homes; and

WHEREAS, the full effects of the institution and legacy of slavery on Black people and communities in New Jersey have not been sufficiently examined, nor have there been remedies for past injustice and present harm, or sufficient efforts at transformation. As a result of historic and continued systemic racial discrimination, Black people in New Jersey confront some of the worst racial disparities in America; and

WHEREAS, this task force and its findings would be critical to the residents of Essex County where, as of the 2020 census, the largest racial group in Essex County is Black/African American at 37.5%; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, the Essex County Board of Chosen Commissioners supports A711/S322 and An Act establishing the "New Jersey Reparations Task Force" to conduct research and develop reparatory proposals and recommendations to address the generational harms caused by New Jersey's role in America's institution of slavery and its legacy of systemic racial discrimination; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to Members of the Essex State Legislative Delegation, Senate President and Assembly Speaker.

*Michael J. Richardson*

Approved as to form and legality \_\_\_\_\_  
 Commissioner Counsel

RECORD OF VOTE (X=Vote N.V.=Abstention ABS=Absent)

Moved by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_  
 Second by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_

Commissioner	Yes	No	N.V.	ABS	Commissioner	Yes	No	N.V.	ABS
COOPER					MERCADO				
GILL					POMARES, V.P.				
GRAHAM					SEBOLD				
JOHNSON									
LUCIANO					RICHARDSON, PRES.				

It is hereby certified that the foregoing Resolution was ( ) adopted ( ) defeated ( ) tabled by roll call vote at a \_\_\_\_\_ meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Essex, New Jersey held on \_\_\_\_\_

Is Publication Required ( ) Yes ( ) No

Date Published \_\_\_\_\_

Wayne L. Richardson, President