

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 196

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a memorial to slavery,
in the District of Columbia.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 7, 2003

Mr. STEARNS (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. QUINN, and Mr. MORAN of Virginia) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a
memorial to slavery, in the District of Columbia.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Slave Memo-
5 rial Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Millions of Africans and their descendants
9 were enslaved in the United States and the 13
10 American colonies in the period 1619 through 1865.

1 (2) The American Colonies determined that eco-
2 nomic benefit would be derived from the import of
3 slave labor and forthwith became an active partici-
4 pant in the “Middle Passage” of African slaves to
5 its shores.

6 (3) Upon their arrival in North America, Afri-
7 cans were considered chattel and thereby denied the
8 privileges granted to other immigrants.

9 (4) The agricultural resources of any nation are
10 the backbone of its subsistence and for over 250
11 years, millions of unnamed African and American-
12 born Black men, women, and children provided the
13 free labor that cultivated the fields from which
14 Americans ate and were clothed, which allowed the
15 dominant population to secure other interests.

16 (5) Slavery was a grave injustice that caused
17 African Americans to suffer enormous damages and
18 losses, both material and intangible, including the
19 loss of human dignity and liberty, the frustration of
20 careers and professional lives, and the long-term loss
21 of income and opportunity.

22 (6) Slavery in the United States denied African
23 Americans the fruits of their own labor and was an
24 immoral and inhumane deprivation of life, liberty,

1 the pursuit of happiness, citizenship rights, and cul-
2 tural heritage.

3 (7) Although the achievements of African
4 Americans in overcoming the evils of slavery stand
5 as a source of tremendous inspiration, the successes
6 of slaves and their descendants do not overwrite the
7 failure of the Nation to grant all Americans their
8 birthright of equality and the civil rights that safe-
9 guard freedom.

10 (8) Many African American slaves fought as
11 valiant patriots in the wars that helped to preserve
12 our national freedoms, knowing they would never be
13 privileged to partake of the freedoms for which they
14 fought.

15 (9) African American art, history, and culture
16 reflect experiences of slavery and freedom, and con-
17 tinued struggles for full recognition of citizenship
18 and treatment with human dignity, and there is in-
19 adequate presentation, preservation, and recognition
20 of the contributions of African Americans within
21 American society.

22 (10) There is a great need for building institu-
23 tions and monuments to promote cultural under-
24 standing of African American heritage and further
25 enhance racial harmony.

1 (11) It is proper and timely for the Congress to
2 recognize June 19, 1865, the historic day when the
3 last group of slaves were informed of their freedom,
4 to acknowledge the historic significance of the aboli-
5 tion of slavery, to express deep regret to African
6 Americans, and to support reconciliation efforts.

7 **SEC. 3. NATIONAL SLAVE MEMORIAL.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—The National Foundation for Af-
9 rican American Heritage (in this Act referred to as the
10 “Foundation”), in consultation with the Secretary of the
11 Interior, is authorized to establish, in the District of Co-
12 lumbia, a memorial to slavery—

13 (1) to acknowledge the fundamental injustice,
14 cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery in the
15 United States and the 13 American Colonies; and

16 (2) to honor the nameless and forgotten men,
17 women, and children who have gone unrecognized
18 for their undeniable and weighty contribution to the
19 United States.

20 (b) LOCATION.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—The memorial shall be situ-
22 ated in a location that is—

23 (A) within the area that is referred to in
24 the Commemorative Works Act (40 U.S.C.

1 1001 et seq.) as Area 1 and in proximity to the
2 Lincoln Memorial; and

3 (B) recommended by the Secretary of the
4 Interior and the National Capital Memorial
5 Commission not later than 6 months after the
6 date of enactment of this Act.

7 (2) COMPLIANCE WITH COMMEMORATIVE
8 WORKS ACT.—This Act shall be treated as satisfying
9 the authorization and location approval requirements
10 of section 6 of the Commemorative Works Act (40
11 U.S.C. 1006).

12 (c) DESIGN.—The Foundation, in consultation with
13 the Secretary of the Interior, and the National Capital
14 Memorial Commission shall—

15 (1) not later than 6 months after the date of
16 enactment of this Act, begin soliciting proposals for
17 the design of the memorial from architects; and

18 (2) not later than 2 years after the date of en-
19 actment of this Act, select a design for the memorial
20 from the proposals submitted to the Secretary.

21 (d) FUNDING.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Inte-
23 rior, in coordination with the Director of the Smith-
24 sonian Institution, may accept donations of any nec-
25 essary funds from the Foundation and other private

1 sector sources to design, construct, and maintain the
2 memorial.

3 (2) ACCOUNT IN TREASURY.—The Secretary
4 shall deposit amounts that are accepted under this
5 subsection into a separate account in the Treasury
6 established for such purpose. Amounts deposited
7 into the account shall be available for expenditure by
8 the Secretary without further appropriation to carry
9 out this Act.

10 **SEC. 4. REPORTS.**

11 (a) PERIODIC REPORTS.—Not later than 6 months
12 after the date of enactment of this Act, and each 6 months
13 thereafter until the submission of a final report under sub-
14 section (b), the Secretary of the Interior shall transmit
15 to the Congress a report on activities with regard to the
16 memorial.

17 (b) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the
18 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall transmit
19 to the Congress a final report on activities with regard
20 to the memorial, including the recommended design of the
21 memorial.

22 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), there
24 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of the

1 Interior such sums as may be necessary for carrying out
2 this Act.

3 (b) LIMITATION.—No sums may be appropriated to
4 the Secretary for the construction of the memorial unless
5 at least one-half of the estimated total cost of the con-
6 struction of the memorial is donated from private sources
7 pursuant to section 3(d).

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