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1                   AMENDMENT TO HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 90

2           AMENDMENT NO. \_\_\_\_\_. Amend House Joint Resolution 90 by  
3 replacing everything after the heading with the following:

4           "WHEREAS, The United States' history as a symbol of  
5 democracy, freedom, and "home of exiles" is brandished around  
6 the world; and

7           WHEREAS, The legacy of our Nation's African-descended  
8 people and indigenous peoples has resounded as an echoing  
9 dissonance in its "symphony of brotherhood" throughout its  
10 history; and

11           WHEREAS, The legacy of African American struggles for  
12 civil, political, and human rights is interwoven in the fabric  
13 of democracy and freedom of the United States; and

14           WHEREAS, Millions of Africans and their descendants were

1 enslaved in the United States, from the original 13 North  
2 American colonies until the abolition of slavery in 1865 with  
3 the 13th Amendment to the Constitution to "slavery by another  
4 name" under the twin regimes of racial economic and social  
5 authoritarianism, called Jim Crow, and domestic terrorism; and

6 WHEREAS, The aggregate value of enslaved African Americans  
7 at the time of Emancipation, measured in 2019 dollars, was more  
8 than 13 trillion dollars, which is a meager percentage of the  
9 unpaid wealth that they produced for the United States'  
10 slave-based economy; and

11 WHEREAS, The gendered racism of the United States' system  
12 of slavery made the productive and reproductive intrinsic value  
13 of enslaved African American women an incalculable source of  
14 the United States' global economic power; and

15 WHEREAS, Africans forced into slavery, brutalized,  
16 humiliated, dehumanized, and subjected to the indignity of  
17 being stripped of their names and heritage makes the  
18 reparations due to African Americans necessary but  
19 insufficient as the United States' payment on the debt of  
20 African American slavery, peonage, and expropriation of Black  
21 asset wealth through fraudulent mortgages like Chicago's  
22 notorious "contract buyers" schemes; and

1           WHEREAS, African American families were torn apart when  
2 family members were sold off, endured further separation and  
3 deprivation under Jim Crow, but sought freedom and economic  
4 opportunities in the Great Migration from the South to northern  
5 Midwest states like Illinois; and

6           WHEREAS, The system of hereditary racial slavery that  
7 commenced not long after "the 1619 year of no return" provided  
8 the foundation of the system of structural racism, inequality,  
9 and white supremacy that became woven into the social fabric of  
10 the United States; and

11           WHEREAS, So embedded in the United States' social,  
12 political, economic, religious, and cultural landscape was the  
13 system of African American subjugation that it took the  
14 apocalypse of the American Civil War to rid the Nation of its  
15 "original sin"; and

16           WHEREAS, The State of Illinois assumes a special place in  
17 the history and memorialization of "the 1619 day of no return"  
18 because of the role that President Abraham Lincoln played as  
19 Commander-in-Chief in defeating the armed revolt of the slave  
20 power of the southern Confederacy against American democracy  
21 and African American freedom; and

22           WHEREAS, It took the powerful working of the United States'

1 democratic electoral system, propelled by the movement of  
2 African American slaves following the North Star to freedom in  
3 solidarity with their White and free Black allies in the  
4 abolitionist movement, to elect and re-elect Abraham Lincoln to  
5 carry out the historic task of ridding the United States of  
6 slavery; and

7 WHEREAS, The great challenge to our experiment in democracy  
8 that we face today gives us further reason to memorialize the  
9 Black struggle for freedom that recommitted the United States  
10 to its democratic ideals, adding the Civil War Amendments  
11 (13th, 14th, and 15th) to the Constitution; and

12 WHEREAS, Illinois has never evinced the same care and  
13 consideration for its Black exiles from Africa that it has for  
14 its White exiles from Europe; and

15 WHEREAS, Every positive step that Illinois has taken toward  
16 racial justice and equality has been reversed by backward  
17 legislative steps that have made Black freedom struggles in  
18 Illinois continuous to this day; and

19 WHEREAS, The 1908 Springfield Race Riot in the State's  
20 capital and seat of the people's representatives was the  
21 catalyst for the formation of the National Association for the  
22 Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); and

1           WHEREAS, The 1917 East St. Louis race riot demonstrated the  
2 tangled history of race, class, and economics that victimized  
3 African Americans who were newly arrived to Illinois from the  
4 South; and

5           WHEREAS, Springfield and East St. Louis also reflected a  
6 new Black assertiveness, a "New Negro", that culminated in the  
7 "Red Summer of 1919" Chicago Race Riot, whose 100th anniversary  
8 is also memorialized with this resolution; and

9           WHEREAS, The history of Illinois' modern system of racial  
10 segregation, heroically countered by the democratic struggles  
11 of the State's African American communities, calls upon all  
12 Illinois legislators to prioritize the State's legislative  
13 agenda around policies and realistic funding appropriations  
14 aimed at addressing the interminable legacy of racial  
15 inequities in African American education, housing, labor  
16 market outcomes, transportation marginalization, business  
17 inequalities, healthcare disparities, and political  
18 decision-making disempowerment; and

19           WHEREAS, The State of Illinois also boasts numerous racial  
20 justice moments throughout its 20th century political history  
21 that have impacted both the State's and the United States'  
22 history, including the election of Abraham Lincoln, the

1 election of Harold Washington as the first Black Mayor of the  
2 City of Chicago, the election of Barack Obama as the first  
3 Black President of the United States, the election of Illinois'  
4 first Black Woman Lieutenant Governor, the election of the  
5 first Black Woman State Representative of Illinois' 103rd  
6 District, representing the University of Illinois  
7 Urbana-Champaign, the appointment of the first Black  
8 Chancellor of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and  
9 the election in Chicago of the first Black LGBTQ Mayor of any  
10 major city in the United States; therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
12 HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
13 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we solemnly observe the 1619  
14 African Year of No Return by observing the Illinois recognition  
15 of the 2019 Year of Return Project resolution; and be it  
16 further

17 RESOLVED, That we urge recognition of Illinois' vibrant  
18 history of African American political struggles for democracy  
19 and freedom that have widened the scope and deepened the  
20 State's and the United States' commitment to democracy and  
21 racial justice; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That we urge adequate appropriations for  
23 investigations, research, publication, and a website to

1 represent Illinois' Black contributions to widening and  
2 deepening the State's and the United States' commitment to  
3 racial justice in memorializing the 1619-2019 Year of Return;  
4 and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That we urge adequate appropriations for the  
6 development of a comprehensive legislative agenda of policies  
7 and racial justice legislation to engage the State's African  
8 American communities in an urgent discussion of their vital  
9 issues and challenges to memorialize the 1619-2019 Year of  
10 Return."