

LAW, JUSTICE, AND ETHICS

Resolution LJE-21-07

A RESOLUTION TO REMOVE THE EXCEPTION FOR SLAVERY FROM THE US CONSTITUTION

WHEREAS, the 13th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States prohibited slavery and involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, since the Amendment's passage by Congress on January 31, 1865, and its ratification on December 6, 1865;

WHEREAS, the 13th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States did not end slavery and involuntary servitude, as it provides an exception for those that have been convicted of a crime;

WHEREAS, the exception to the 13th Amendment contributed to a carceral system and mass incarceration that did not exist before the passage of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States;

WHEREAS, after the 13th amendment, laws and practices were implemented that included: Jim Crow; Segregation; Redlining; Voter suppression; Dred Scott; the "War on Drugs," and Police brutality;

WHEREAS, the inability to build generational wealth relegates individuals to poverty and living without basic necessities, and the prison industrial complex perpetuates this because: (1) prison labor is slavery; (2) instead of paying workers, taxpayers pay for correctional centers to give corporations free labor; and (3) unfair justice systems are built to keep black inmates in prison and benefit from the increase low-cost labor;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators supports an amendment to the US Constitution that strikes "except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted" from the 13th amendment;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and other federal and state government officials and agencies as appropriate.

SPONSOR: Representative Carol Ammons (IL)

Committee of Jurisdiction: Law, Justice, and Ethics Policy Committee

Certified by Committee Chair: Representative Reginald Meeks (KY)

Ratified in Plenary Session: Ratification Date is December 3, 2020

Ratification is certified by: Representative Gilda Cobb-Hunter (SC), President