

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. CON. RES. 24

To direct the Architect of the Capitol to place a marker in Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center which acknowledges the role that slave labor played in the construction of the United States Capitol, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 21, 2009

Mrs. LINCOLN (for herself, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. CHAMBLISS) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To direct the Architect of the Capitol to place a marker in Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center which acknowledges the role that slave labor played in the construction of the United States Capitol, and for other purposes.

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
2 *concurring),*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds the following:

5 (1) Enslaved African-Americans provided labor
6 essential to the construction of the United States
7 Capitol.

1 (2) The report of the Architect of the Capitol
2 entitled “History of Slave Laborers in the Construc-
3 tion of the United States Capitol” documents the
4 role of slave labor in the construction of the Capitol.

5 (3) Enslaved African-Americans performed the
6 backbreaking work of quarrying the stone which
7 comprised many of the floors, walls, and columns of
8 the Capitol.

9 (4) Enslaved African-Americans also partici-
10 pated in other facets of construction of the Capitol,
11 including carpentry, masonry, carting, rafting, roof-
12 ing, plastering, glazing, painting, and sawing.

13 (5) The marble columns in the Old Senate
14 Chamber and the sandstone walls of the East Front
15 corridor remain as the lasting legacies of the
16 enslaved African-Americans who worked the quar-
17 ries.

18 (6) Slave-quarried stones from the remnants of
19 the original Capitol walls can be found in Rock
20 Creek Park in the District of Columbia.

21 (7) The Statue of Freedom now atop the Cap-
22 itol dome could not have been cast without the piv-
23 otal intervention of Philip Reid, an enslaved African-
24 American foundry worker who deciphered the puzzle

1 of how to separate the 5-piece plaster model for
 2 casting, when all others failed.

3 (8) The great hall of the Capitol Visitor Center
 4 was named Emancipation Hall to help acknowledge
 5 the work of the slave laborers who built the Capitol.

6 (9) No narrative on the construction of the
 7 Capitol that does not include the contribution of
 8 enslaved African-Americans can fully and accurately
 9 reflect its history.

10 (10) Recognition of the contributions of
 11 enslaved African-Americans brings to all Americans
 12 an understanding of the continuing evolution of our
 13 representative democracy.

14 (11) A marker dedicated to the enslaved Afri-
 15 can-Americans who helped to build the Capitol will
 16 reflect the charge of the Capitol Visitor Center to
 17 teach visitors about Congress and its development.

18 **SEC. 2. PLACEMENT OF MARKER IN CAPITOL VISITOR CEN-**
 19 **TER TO ACKNOWLEDGE ROLE OF SLAVE**
 20 **LABOR IN CONSTRUCTION OF CAPITOL.**

21 (a) PROCUREMENT AND PLACEMENT OF MARKER.—
 22 The Architect of the Capitol, subject to the approval of
 23 the Committee on House Administration of the House of
 24 Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Admin-
 25 istration of the Senate, shall design, procure, and place

1 in a prominent location in Emancipation Hall in the Cap-
2 itol Visitor Center a marker which acknowledges the role
3 that slave labor played in the construction of the United
4 States Capitol.

5 (b) CRITERIA FOR DESIGN OF MARKER.—In devel-
6 oping the design for the marker required under subsection
7 (a), the Architect of the Capitol shall—

8 (1) take into consideration the recommenda-
9 tions developed by the Slave Labor Task Force
10 Working Group;

11 (2) to the greatest extent practicable, ensure
12 that the marker includes stone which was quarried
13 by slaves in the construction of the Capitol; and

14 (3) ensure that the marker includes a plaque or
15 inscription which describes the purpose of the mark-
16 er.

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