

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1375

Recognizing the history between Haiti and France, acknowledging Haiti as the first free Black nation in the Americas, recognizing how the aftermath of their freedom is directly related to their impoverished state today, and realizing the importance of this history.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 20, 2022

Mr. TORRES of New York (for himself and Ms. CLARKE of New York) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the history between Haiti and France, acknowledging Haiti as the first free Black nation in the Americas, recognizing how the aftermath of their freedom is directly related to their impoverished state today, and realizing the importance of this history.

Whereas the revolutionary movement in Haiti was the first successful slave revolution in 1791, freeing itself from French rule;

Whereas Haiti established an independent nation in 1804, decades before other colonies and nations fought against their enslavement;

Whereas, in 1825, French warships appeared on the coast of Port-au-Prince with an ultimatum from French King Charles X to give reparations to former slave masters or face another war;

Whereas Haiti's President Jean-Pierre Boyer agreed in an effort to avoid war and begin trade with other countries;

Whereas, for generations after independence, Haitians were forced to pay the descendants of their former slave masters, becoming the world's first and only country to have "independence debt";

Whereas these payments extended to the Empress of Brazil, the son-in-law of the Russian Emperor Nicholas I, Germany's last imperial chancellor Otto von Bismarck, and French general Gaston de Galliffet;

Whereas the first installment of payment was six times the country's income;

Whereas Haiti was forced to take out loans from French banks to make payments, creating "double debt";

Whereas, historically, Haitian leaders have ransacked the country for their own gain, as legislators have spoken openly on the radio about accepting bribes and oligarchs sit atop lucrative monopolies;

Whereas Transparency International ranks Haiti among the most corrupt countries in the world;

Whereas Haitians have paid about \$560,000,000 in today's dollars toward the double debt;

Whereas most workers in Haiti have never had running water or septic tanks;

Whereas public hospitals lack the most essential supplies, like blood pressure cuffs or thermometers; and

Whereas few of the economic hardships imposed by the French are recognized and are not covered in French schools, and recent conversations with the French Government have been squashed: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes the long-forgotten history be-
3 tween Haiti and France and its direct impact on the
4 economic and social challenges Haiti faces today;

5 (2) pledges to make this history known
6 throughout the United States;

7 (3) welcomes Haitian immigrants presently in
8 the United States and individuals seeking to immi-
9 grate to the United States to contribute to the
10 health, safety, diversity, and prosperity of the
11 United States by finding their place in the vibrant,
12 multiethnic, and integrated society of the United
13 States;

14 (4) encourages the people of the United States
15 to work with their Haitian immigrant neighbors and
16 colleagues to advance the current and future well-
17 being of immigrants to the United States;

18 (5) commits to working with fellow Members of
19 Congress, the executive agencies that administer im-
20 migration laws and policies, and the President to
21 promote smart and just immigration policy for Hai-
22 tian immigrants presently in the United States, their

1 families, and individuals seeking to immigrate to the
2 United States in the future; and
3 (6) commits to working with international orga-
4 nizations to administer aid, in the form of programs,
5 resources, and foreign policies, that continue to help
6 Haiti's economic and social recovery.

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