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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-SECOND SESSION

H. F. No. 3850

02/28/2022

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The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Judiciary Finance and Civil Law

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to state government; establishing the Minnesota Migration Act;
1.3 appropriating money to study and develop reparation proposals for American
1.4 descendants of chattel slavery who reside in this state; requiring a report.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. MINNESOTA MIGRATION ACT.

1.7 Subdivision 1. Findings. The legislature finds:

1.8 (1) beginning in 1619 and continuing through 1863, slavery enriched American industries
1.9 and commercial and financial institutions and transformed the newly established United
1.10 States into an international economic power through the oppressive, dehumanizing, and
1.11 tortuous system of enslaved Black labor;

1.12 (2) slave owners invested heavily in the territory that is now known as the state of
1.13 Minnesota and after slavery ended in the United States, the slave owners were compensated
1.14 for the loss of their slaves. Those persons who were held in bondage were never compensated
1.15 for their labor, despite the promise of "40 acres and a mule";

1.16 (3) although slavery was illegal in Minnesota, Dred Scott and Harriet Scott were held
1.17 in bondage at Fort Snelling, along with other African Americans who were used for enslaved
1.18 labor by United States Army agents. This was in violation of the Northwest Ordinance of
1.19 1787 and the Missouri Compromise of 1820;

1.20 (4) in the aftermath of slavery, African American citizens of this country continued to
1.21 face brutal discrimination as evidenced by Jim Crow laws, such as forced segregation, mass

2.1 atrocities in Tulsa and Rosewood, the lynching period in history, and to this day mass  
2.2 incarceration;

2.3 (5) in Minnesota, systemic discrimination was perpetrated through redlining and racial  
2.4 covenants; access to housing; environmental injustice; and the removal of St. Paul's Rondo  
2.5 neighborhood, which was the center of American descendants of chattel slavery business  
2.6 and residential, spiritual, and cultural life, for the construction of I-94 and other interstate  
2.7 systems that harmed Black communities in Minnesota;

2.8 (6) that structural institutionalized racism in Minnesota and all of American society has  
2.9 led to overwhelming Black-white disparities in housing, business investment, economic  
2.10 prosperity, health and wellness, life expectancy, and infant mortality;

2.11 (7) that according to the November 2020 edition of the New England Journal of Medicine,  
2.12 reparations are considered the most effective means of breaking down the societal structure  
2.13 related to power, money, and access to resources and may be the only solution that can be  
2.14 applied intergenerationally that would be an investment in the future and in reducing  
2.15 disparities;

2.16 (8) that local and state governments throughout the United States have demonstrated a  
2.17 commitment to addressing disparities by creating programs to generate public and private  
2.18 sources of funding, including dedicating tax revenues from enterprises that have historically  
2.19 profited from targeting African American consumers and other forms of discrimination that  
2.20 have fueled Black-white disparities; and

2.21 (9) that the tragic murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer has stirred a  
2.22 local, national, and international reckoning of the immorality of the racial hierarchy that  
2.23 exists under our democratic institutions and defies the founding values of this nation "that  
2.24 all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable  
2.25 Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

2.26 Subd. 2. **Acknowledgment and apology.** The state shall issue an apology for the past  
2.27 occurrence of chattel slavery and notable slave owners in Minnesota. Minnesota  
2.28 acknowledges and issues an official apology:

2.29 (1) for holding Dred and Harriet Scott in military slavery at Fort Snelling;

2.30 (2) to the family of Elias Clayton, Elmer Jackson, and Isaac McGhie for the lynching  
2.31 that took place in 1920 in Duluth and shall issue an anti-lynching proclamation and legislation  
2.32 for the state;

3.1 (3) to the Rondo neighborhood and other Black communities for the construction of the  
3.2 I- 94 freeway and other highways that were constructed in Black communities in Minnesota;

3.3 (4) to the families of George Floyd, Philando Castille, Hardel Sherrell, and Jamar Clark  
3.4 and the state shall implement remedies to reform law enforcement in the state;

3.5 (5) for allowing racial housing covenants in deeds in the state and committing to work  
3.6 to create generational wealth for the descendants of chattel slavery;

3.7 (6) for having the word "slavery" removed from the Minnesota state constitution; and

3.8 (7) for the systemic racism in the state and the impact slavery has had on descendants  
3.9 of chattel slavery in this state, and the state shall commit to ending systemic racism in the  
3.10 state that prevents upward mobility of Minnesota's Black residents.

3.11 **Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION; STUDY ON EFFECTS OF SLAVERY ON BLACK**  
3.12 **MINNESOTANS.**

3.13 (a) \$2,000,000 in fiscal year 2023 is appropriated from the general fund to the  
3.14 commissioner of human rights to provide a grant to the Minnesota Migration Act Steering  
3.15 Committee to study the effects of systemic racism on Black Minnesotans who are descendants  
3.16 of persons who were treated as chattel slaves in this state. The steering committee shall  
3.17 analyze the past economic benefits of slavery and institutional racism that accrued to owners  
3.18 and businesses that received those benefits. The steering committee shall also identify and  
3.19 document the institution of slavery and the money received from the dehumanizing activity  
3.20 of slavery and identify the public and private institutions that benefited from anti-Black  
3.21 practices.

3.22 (b) The steering committee shall issue a written report of the steering committee's findings  
3.23 and make recommendations to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over human  
3.24 rights to identify: (1) the form of compensation that should be awarded and the mechanisms  
3.25 through which it should be dispersed; and (2) those persons who should be eligible for the  
3.26 compensation.