

# CONGRESSMAN AL GREEN'S

PROGENITOR OF AUGUST 20th AS SLAVERY REMEMBRANCE DAY  
SCION OF THE ENSLAVED AFRICANS SACRIFICED TO MAKE AMERICA GREAT

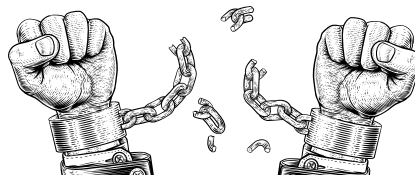
## CONSCIENCE AGENDA

### Our Moral Imperative



Contact us at:  
Houston (713) 383-9234  
Washington, D.C. (202) 225-7508  
Or visit our website at:  
[Algreen.house.gov](http://Algreen.house.gov)





# **THE CONSCIENCE AGENDA**

## **Our Moral Imperative**

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 20, 2022

**Statement by President Joe Biden Marking Slavery Remembrance Day**

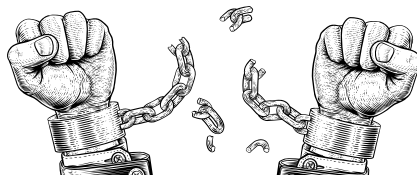
More than 400 years ago, twenty enslaved Africans were forcibly brought to the shores of what would become the United States. Millions more were stolen and sold in the centuries that followed, part of a system of slavery that is America's original sin.

Great nations don't hide from their history. They acknowledge their past, both the triumphs and the tragedies. Today is a day to reflect on the terrible toll of slavery, and on our nation's profound ability to heal and emerge stronger. Despite the horrors they faced, these men and women and their descendants have made countless contributions to the building of this nation and the continuous effort to realize the American ideal. I was honored last year to declare Juneteenth a national holiday, another moment to reflect and rededicate ourselves to becoming a more perfect union. And it's why my Administration will continue the hard, ongoing work to bring true equity and racial justice to our country.

I'm grateful for the efforts of Congress—in particular, Representative Al Green and Senator Elizabeth Warren—to recognize the significance of this day.

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# THE CONSCIENCE AGENDA

## Summary

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### **Our Moral Imperative**

#### **1. Expanding A Slavery Remembrance Day**

- To commemorate the lives of all those who suffered under slavery, one of the greatest crimes against humanity, while also condemning the act and perpetuation of that crime in the United States.
- Such a day of remembrance would prevent the evils of slavery from fading from our collective memory so as to prevent it from ever happening again.

#### **2. Awarding A Congressional Gold Medal to the American Enslaved**

- To honor the foundational mothers, fathers, and children whose lives were sacrificed to build a foundation for America's greatness.
- Just as Congress honored Confederate soldiers in 1956 with a Congressional Gold Medal, it should honor those they sought to keep enslaved in at least the same way.

#### **3. Enacting the Securities and Exchange Atonement Act**

- To investigate the extent of financial companies' historical connections to slavery and to facilitate atonement from those companies.

#### **4. Establish the Department of Reconciliation**

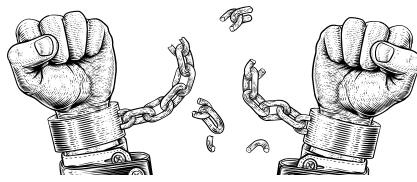
- To create a Cabinet-level Department of Reconciliation tasked with creating a national comprehensive strategy to eliminate all forms of invidious discrimination.
- This department would be designed to correct past, and prevent future transgressions against the victims of invidious discrimination, including: Asian, Black, Hispanic, Native American, Women, LGBTQIA+, All Religions and other minority groups who face unjust discrimination and disadvantage.

#### **4. Removing the Name of Richard B. Russell from the Russell Senate Office Building**

- To remove the name of a racist and self-proclaimed white supremacist from the tax-supported Russell Senate Office Building.

#### **6. Prince Hall Resolution**

- To proclaim the Honorable Prince Hall as Father of our nation's oldest human rights fraternal order - The Free and Accepted Masons.



# THE CONSCIENCE AGENDA

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## **Our Moral Imperative** ***Continued***

### **7. Recognize the 25th Army Corps of the Union Army**

- Consisting of More Than One Thousand African Descendant Soldiers: This resolution honors the role played by the 25th Army Corps in capturing Galveston, Texas on June 5, 1865. Their brave actions resulted in the liberation of thousands of enslaved individuals. By endorsing this resolution, we pay tribute to these heroes who made Juneteenth possible.

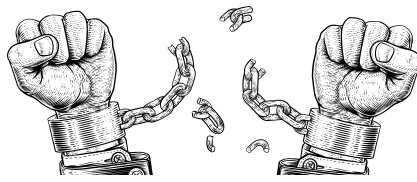
### **8. Recognize Reverend Nat Turner**

- Reverend Nat Turner (a freedom fighter of African Ancestry) took a valorous stance against the horrors of slavery and set a standard for resistance by becoming a leader in the opposition to one of the great crimes against humanity. This resolution seeks to honor his courageous actions and his fight to ensure the Jeffersonian words, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal..." applied to the enslaved.

### **9. Honor John Brown**

- John Brown ( a white liberator of the enslaved ) took an unwavering stance against slavery, marking a pivotal turn in our nation's history. His bold actions, notably the raid on Harpers Ferry, accelerated the U.S. towards the Civil War and the eventual emancipation of the enslaved like Paul Revere and Crispus Attucks. Brown's dedication and sacrifice highlight our nation's profound journey towards its professed principles of liberty and equality. This resolution seeks to honor Brown and inspire reflection on our nation's complex history.





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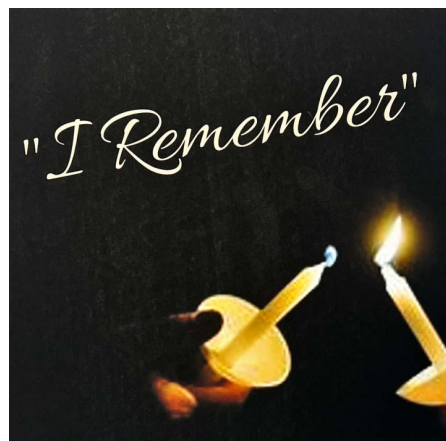
### Slavery Remembrance Day

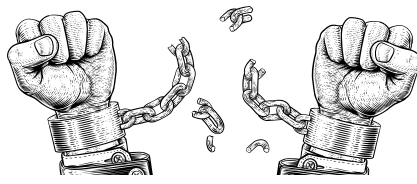
#### H.Res.517 - Original Slavery Remembrance Day Resolution of 2021

- This resolution passed the House on July 27, 2022, with 137 cosponsors.
- The resolution would establish a Slavery Remembrance Day on August 20th - each year.
- In 2022, President Biden acknowledged the day in a press release.

#### Why?

Unlike Juneteenth, Slavery Remembrance Day is intended to be a day to commemorate the victims of slavery instead of celebrating its end. August 20th was chosen to commemorate the day the first slave ship, the *White Lion*, arrived in the English-speaking American colonies at Point Comfort, Virginia near what is today called Norfolk, Virginia.





## THE CONSCIENCE AGENDA

### A Congressional Gold Medal for Enslaved Africans

H.R.1244 - The original legislation awarding a historic Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to Africans and their descendants enslaved within our country from August 20, 1619 to December 6, 1865.

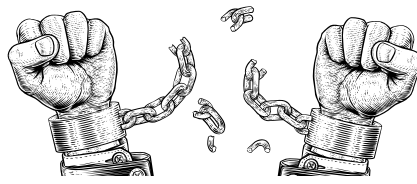
- This bill was introduced on February 28, 2023, and has 123 cosponsors.
- This bill would posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to Africans and their descendants enslaved within our country from August 20, 1619 to December 6, 1865.



#### Why?

Congressional Gold Medals have been posthumously awarded to groups of individuals in the past. A Congressional Gold Medal was even awarded to surviving veterans of the American Civil War in 1956 – including three veterans of the Confederate Military. However, a Congressional Gold Medal has never been awarded to enslaved persons in recognition of their service as monumental contributors to the foundation of America's economic greatness. This historic legislation will recognize the magnitude of their economic contributions.





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## Securities and Exchange Atonement Act

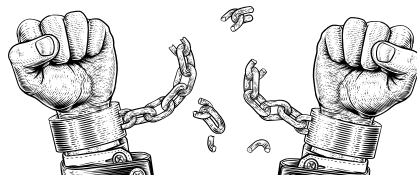
**H.R.8933 – To amend the Securities Act of 1933 to require covered issuers to carry out a racial equity audit every 2 years, to require atonement for the descendants of enslaved persons, and for other purposes.**

- Introduced on July 5, 2024, and has 9 cosponsors.
- This bill requires companies to regularly audit and report to the Securities Exchange Commission any historic ties to slavery as well as their policies and practices on civil rights, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- If the audit finds direct or indirect ties to, or profits from, the institution of slavery, the company must disclose actions taken to atone for these ties and reconcile for such profits.
- Failure to issue the audit report may result in fines against the company.

### Why?

Historically, some banks profited from the institution of slavery by accepting enslaved people as collateral for loans, as well as capital for other forms of exploitation. Many banks today have ties to slavery as a result of acquiring banks that participated in these historical practices. The extent of the industry's involvement with slavery is not well-known nor publicized. This bill will dedicate resources to uncover the industry's involvement so that it can begin to atone for their past invidious practices.





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## Department of Reconciliation

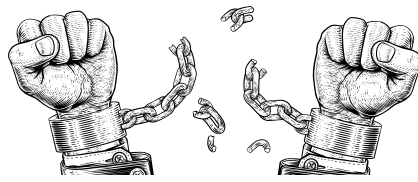
**H.Res.657 - Declaring unconditional war on racism and invidious discrimination and providing for the establishment of a Cabinet-level Department of Reconciliation charged with eliminating racism and invidious discrimination.**

- This resolution was introduced on August 18, 2023, and has 11 cosponsors.
- This resolution condemns and declares unconditional war on racism and invidious discrimination in America.
- The resolution expresses the intention of the House of Representatives to pass legislation establishing a Cabinet-level Department of Reconciliation to develop and coordinate a national strategy to eliminate the social ills referenced.

### Why?

Systemic racism and invidious discrimination affect virtually all areas of American life, including policing, criminal justice, housing, banking, voting, employment, education, the environment, and health care. This legislation seeks long-term legislative action to address these negative effects by establishing a Cabinet-level Department of Reconciliation that will develop and coordinate a comprehensive national strategy to eliminate all forms of invidious discrimination, with a budget that is equal to at least 10% of the Defense Department's budget.





## THE CONSCIENCE AGENDA

### Resolution to Remove the name Richard B. Russell from the Russell Senate Office Building

#### H.Res.654 - Calling on the Senate to Remove the Name of Richard B. Russell from the Russell Senate Office Building

- This resolution was introduced on August 18, 2023, and has 12 cosponsors.
- This resolution calls on the Senate to remove the name of Richard B. Russell from the Russell Senate Office Building and revert to the building's original name, the Old Senate Office Building, until the Senate selects another honoree.

#### Why?

The Old Senate Office Building was named after Richard Brevard Russell Jr., an unapologetic white supremacist. He was the chief legislative architect of the South's bitter opposition to civil rights, co-authoring the "Southern Manifesto" to slow the integration of public schools and voted against the 1964 Civil Rights Act. His views do not represent the values of America. This resolution seeks to remove his name to prevent the glorification of those who actively spread hatred and discrimination.





## Original

# Slavery Commemorative Remembrance Ceremony

**By Congressman Al Green**

*Progenitor of August 20th as Slavery Remembrance Day*

*Scion of the Enslaved Africans Sacrificed to Make America Great*

## **PREAMBLE**

Friends, thank you for your participation. If you can, please join me by standing and placing your right hand over your heart to show our heartfelt sorrow for the millions who suffered the horrors of slavery.

Over the next few minutes, we will recall various well-documented aspects of the experiences of American slaves.

At the end of each of these summarized experiences, I will say the words **“we must”**:

Immediately after I say **“we must,”** I would like you (**each of you**) to, in unison, say **“always remember.”**



**Let's begin,**

**Leader:** To prevent the evils of slavery from being repeated **we must:**

**Assemblage:** Always remember.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Leader:** To commemorate the suffering and the lives lost because of slavery **we must:**

**Assemblage:** Always remember.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Leader:** For the first 20 enslaved Africans who arrived in the British colonies on August 20, 1619 at Point Comfort near what is now Norfolk Virginia **we must:**

**Assemblage:** Always remember.



**Leader:** For the 12 million humans from all walks of life stolen from Africa, many of whom were knowledgeable of medicine, mathematics, astronomy, farming, and craftsmen in gold, bronze as well as Ivory **we must:**

**Assemblage:** Always remember.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Leader:** For the Africans sold into slavery by other Africans **we must:**

**Assemblage:** Always remember.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Leader:** For the **12 percent** of human beings who suffered the deadly middle passage and did not survive the horrific voyage to America **we must:**

**Assemblage:** Always remember.





**Leader:** For the men, women, and children on slave ships, many of whom kept naked, packed close together with many shackled and chained **we must:**

**Assemblage:** Always remember.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Leader:** For enslaved human beings who often worked from **10** to **16** hours a day, **6** to **7** days a week, often without adequate food **we must:**

**Assemblage:** Always remember.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Leader:** For the mothers and fathers who were separated from their children and sold on the auction blocks **we must:**

**Assemblage:** Always remember.



**Leader:** For the freedom fighters such as Nat Turner, who fought to free enslaved people; who gave their lives in the fight for freedom and justice **we must:**

**Assemblage:** Always remember.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Leader:** For the **tens of thousands** of slaves who risked their lives in search of freedom on the Underground Railroad **we must:**

**Assemblage:** Always remember.



**Leader:** For freedom fighters such as Harriet Tubman, who escaped slavery and dedicated her life to returning to the South no less than **13** times freeing enslaved men, women and children, **we must:**

**Assemblage:** Always remember.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Leader:** For the white liberators like John Brown and President Abraham Lincoln, who lived and died combatting the horrific institution of Slavery **we must:**

**Assemblage:** Always remember.



**Leader:** To commemorate the centuries of suffering, the years of tears shed, the history of hearts broken, the brutality of blood spilled, and the grieving over lives lost because of slavery **we must:**

**Assemblage: Always remember.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Leader:** Yet, in the spirit of righteous remembrance imbued with love for our country that hasn't always loved its brothers and sisters of African ancestry, we have to **acknowledge that:**

In spite of slavery and despite its invidious offsprings: mass lynchings, convict leasing, black codes, lawful segregation, and institutional racism, African Americans have come a laudably long way.



- From our arrival on slave ships to our ascension to judge ships,
- From surviving the middle passage to thriving among the masses,
- From shackled in chains to creating societal change,
- From sitting in the back of buses to owning bus companies,
- From having no house to living in the White House,
- From painfully picking cotton, to proudly picking presidents,



- From adult males and females being disrespectfully called boy and girl to being respectfully presented as Mr. President and Madam Vice President,

The truth be told, although we have come a laudably long way, we still have an acclivous way to go.

**Leader:** In closing, let us resolve that as we forge forward we will commemorate our past and embrace our destiny, always remembering the hardships people of African heritage have endured, in tandem with the victories won in spite of the seemingly invincible challenges emanating from insidious slavery and its invidious progenies!





**Leader: Through it all we must:**

**Assemblage: Always Remember.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Leader: We must:**

**Assemblage: Always Remember.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Leader: We must:**

**Assemblage: Always Remember.**



**Leader:** If you are able, I would ask that you participate in a moment of silent solemnity at noon on August 20<sup>th</sup> wherever you may be. During this moment, wherever you are, place your right hand over your heart and with a moment of silent solemnity, give thoughts to the millions who toiled and lost their lives under Slavery, and lovingly utter the phrase

**“I Remember.”**



