HLS 18RS-1970 ORIGINAL

2018 Regular Session

1

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 51

BY REPRESENTATIVE BRASS

BOARDS/COMMISSIONS: Creates the Ancestors Burial Ground and Cemetery Preservation Commission

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

| 2 | To create and establish the Ancestors Burial Ground and Cemetery Preservation | | |
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| 3 | Commission to study and develop measures to preserve and protect unmarked and | | |
| 4 | historic burial grounds, graves, and cemeteries of slaves in Louisiana. | | |
| 5 | WHEREAS, preservation of the burial grounds and cemeteries of slaves is significant | | |
| 6 | because they represent not only an important part of the cultural heritage of Louisiana, but | | |
| 7 | America; and | | |
| 8 | WHEREAS, although most burial grounds and cemeteries of slaves contain | | |
| 9 | unmarked graves, the research uncovered from these burial places reveals information about | | |
| 10 | how the people lived, their connections to each other and the surrounding community o | | |
| 11 | plantations, and most of all, their connections to the descendants living now; and | | |
| 12 | WHEREAS, most records regarding burial grounds and cemeteries of slaves are | | |
| 13 | limited to plantation inventories and incomplete census records; nevertheless, these are | | |
| 14 | sacred grounds that should be regarded as such; and | | |
| 15 | WHEREAS, the discovery of these grounds and cemeteries is instrumental in helping | | |
| 16 | families trace their family roots; moreover, it is important that these sacred spaces are | | |
| 17 | preserved and protected to ensure that the knowledge about the legacy of the enslaved and | | |
| 18 | free people who worked on the plantations is preserved for future generations; and | | |
| 19 | WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana acknowledges the humanity of all the people | | |
| 20 | buried in long-lost graves along the Mississippi River; and | | |

| 1 | WHE | REAS, the state of Louisiana also acknowledges their contributions to the | |
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| 2 | economy and culture of this great state and this nation; and | | |
| 3 | WHEREAS, by acknowledging and protecting these sites, we are presenting a | | |
| 4 | meaningful way to better understand the reality of slavery, which will hopefully give us a | | |
| 5 | better underst | anding of the heritage and history of our friends, colleagues, and neighbors. | |
| 6 | THER | EFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby | |
| 7 | create the Ancestors Burial Ground and Cemetery Preservation Commission to study and | | |
| 8 | develop measures to preserve and protect unmarked and historic burial grounds, graves, and | | |
| 9 | cemeteries of slaves in Louisiana. | | |
| 0 | BE I | FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall be comprised of | |
| 1 | representative | es assigned from relevant and interested state agencies and other relevant and | |
| 12 | interested par | ties, including but not limited to all of the following: | |
| 13 | (1) | The state archaeologist and director of the office of cultural development, | |
| 4 | | within the Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, in the office of | |
| 15 | | the lieutenant governor. | |
| 16 | (2) | One member of the Louisiana House of Representatives appointed by the | |
| 17 | | speaker of the House of Representatives. | |
| 18 | (3) | One member of the Louisiana Senate appointed by the president of the | |
| 19 | | Senate. | |
| 20 | (4) | The chair of the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus or his designee. | |
| 21 | (5) | The executive director of the Louisiana Sheriff's Association or his designee. | |
| 22 | (6) | The chair of the Louisiana Cemetery Board or his designee. | |
| 23 | (7) | The executive director of Save Our Cemeteries or his designee. | |
| 24 | (8) | The president of the Le Comité des Archives de la Louisiane, Inc. or his | |
| 25 | | designee. | |
| 26 | (9) | The president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored | |
| 27 | | People (NAACP) Baton Rouge branch or his designee. | |
| 28 | (10) | The chair of the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce or | |
| 29 | | his designee. | |
| 30 | (11) | One representative of the office of research and strategic initiatives of the | |
| 31 | | Southern University and Agricultural and Mechanical College. | |

1 (12)The attorney general or his designee who is an attorney. 2 (13)The State Superintendent of Education or his disignee. 3 (14) The governor or his designee. 4 One representative of the River Road African American Museum. (15)5 (16)Two representatives of the American Sugar Cane League. 6 (17) One representative of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry. 7 One representative of the Louisiana Chemical Association. (18)8 (19)One representative of the Ascension Parish Tourism Commission. 9 One representative of the Iberville Tourist Commission. (20)10 (21) Two representatives of the River Parishes Tourist Commission representing 11 St. James Parish and St. John the Baptist Parish, respectively. 12 (22)One owner of a plantation in the river parishes appointed from a list of three 13 nominees submitted by the River Parishes Tourist Commission. 14 (23) Three representatives of the general public who have demonstrated a 15 commitment to the preservation and protection of historic cemeteries 16 appointed from a list of five nominees submitted by Save Our Cemeteries. 17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission is assigned to the office of the 18 lieutenant governor with staff support to be provided from existing personnel within the 19 office. 20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state archaeologist and director of the office 21 of cultural development shall serve as chair of the commission. 22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, at the first meeting of the commission, the 23 members may elect a vice chair and other officers as they may deem appropriate. 24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall be domiciled in Baton 25 Rouge but may hold public meetings elsewhere in the state. 26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall meet as necessary and 27 shall serve without compensation and at no expense to the state. 28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that member vacancies shall be filled in the same 29 manner as the original appointments. 30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the purpose of the commission shall be to 31 analyze, develop, or identify, nonexclusively, all of the following:

1 **(1)** A cost-effective mechanism for cataloging unmarked and historic burial 2 grounds, graves, and cemeteries of slaves in Louisiana. 3 Measures designed to protect the location of these sites from desecration. (2) 4 Local, state, and federal cemetery protection laws to determine rules and (3) 5 regulations for the identification, protection, and preservation of such 6 grounds and cemeteries. 7 **(4)** Funding sources for the preservation and protection of these sites in 8 conjunction with the River Road African American Museum. 9 (5) Methods for incorporating findings into educational history for students in 10 kindergarten through twelfth grade. 11 (6) Strategies for incorporating historical sites as tourist attractions in this state. 12 Proposed legislation intended to strengthen preservation laws. **(7)** 13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall submit a written report of 14 its findings and recommendations, including proposed legislation if necessary and reasons 15 therefor, to the House Committee on Commerce and the Senate Committee on Commerce, 16 Consumer Protection, and International Affairs on or before February 1, 2019. 17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted 18 to the appointing entities named in this Resolution.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HCR 51 Original

2018 Regular Session

Brass

Creates the Ancestors Burial Ground and Cemetery Preservation Commission to study and develop measures to preserve and protect unmarked and historic burial grounds, graves, and cemeteries of slaves in the state of La.

Requires the commission to report its findings to the House Committee on Commerce and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and International Affairs by Feb. 1, 2019.