



Kentucky Commission on Human Rights Resolution

Urging Removal of Slavery from Section 25 of Kentucky Constitution

To All Whom These Presents Shall Come:

WHEREAS, The United States of America outlawed slavery upon passage of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1865; and

WHEREAS, Kentucky refused to ratify the 13th Amendment until March 18th, 1976; and

WHEREAS, In an effort to prolong the vestiges of slavery, Kentucky alongside many southern states adopted so called "punishment clauses" retaining the option of slavery in circumstances in which a person has been duly convicted; and

WHEREAS, The punishment clauses were used to create a system of prison labor, along with the passage of "Black Codes" which criminalized common behaviors often attributed to Black Americans; and

WHEREAS, All forms of slavery are repugnant, regardless of any circumstances, including as punishment for crime; and

WHEREAS, There should be no place for any provision in our State Constitution which permits slavery, even if limited to punishment for crime; and

WHEREAS, The Commission has previously adopted a resolution asking for the removal of Section 25 of the Kentucky Constitution in 2015; and

WHEREAS, Given the Commission's essential function, duty, and responsibility to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all the citizens of the Commonwealth:

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,
Slavery, as referenced in Section 25 of the Kentucky Constitution, should be unconditionally prohibited.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,
That a copy of this Resolution be presented to the Kentucky Legislative Research Commission for distribution to each member of the Kentucky General Assembly and to the Governor of Kentucky and incorporated into the minutes of the next regularly convened Commission Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky on February 16, 2023.

On Behalf of the Commission:

Handwritten signature of Raymond M. Burse in cursive script.

Raymond M. Burse
Commission Chair

Attest:

Handwritten signature of Terrance A. Sullivan in cursive script.

Terrance A. Sullivan
Executive Director