

Commission on Human Rights

Kentucky Human Rights Commission asks citizens to remove slavery as form of punishment from state constitution

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August 20 2015 Louisville, Kentucky USA – The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights Board of Commissioners at its meeting today unanimously passed a resolution that urges the people of Kentucky to remove from the Kentucky Constitution, in Section 25, a provision that permits slavery as punishment for a crime.

Kentucky Human Rights Commissioner Richard E. Brown of Owensboro, Ky., who represents the 2nd Supreme Court District, introduced the resolution at today's meeting to the commission board.

Commissioner Brown said of the matter: "All forms of slavery are cruel, repugnant and immoral, regardless of any circumstances, including the conviction of a crime, and no form of slavery should be condoned in Kentucky's constitution. It is an insult to all our citizens including those whose ancestors were kidnapped and held captive as slaves, which continued for generations."

The resolution states:

"There should be no place for any provision in our State Constitution or statues that permit slavery, even if it be limited to punishment for crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.

"In this time of national mourning and reflection over the tragedy of the racially motivated church killings in Charleston, South Carolina, it is incumbent on our society to seek out and expunge from our laws, practices or customs all vestiges of the cruel and immoral institution of slavery.

"Any reference to slavery in Section 25 of the Kentucky Constitution should be expressly limited to its unconditional prohibition.

"The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights stands with and all civil and human rights advocates that promote civil and human rights and all Kentucky citizens of goodwill, to

encourage and recommend that the General Assembly pass appropriate legislation to begin the process of amending Section 25 of the Kentucky Constitution to remove any reference to, or suggestion that, slavery is acceptable for any reason in Kentucky, including as a punishment for crime.”

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