

105TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. CON. RES. 161

Recognizing the 150th anniversary of the emancipation of African slaves  
in the Danish West Indies, now the United States Virgin Islands.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 30, 1997

Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN (for herself, Mr. DELLUMS, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. FILNER, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. FROST, and Mr. DIXON) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

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## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Recognizing the 150th anniversary of the emancipation of African slaves in the Danish West Indies, now the United States Virgin Islands.

Whereas prior to July 3, 1848, many Africans were held as slaves on the islands of the Danish West Indies, now the United States Virgin Islands;

Whereas on July 3, 1848, under the leadership of Moses “General Budhoe” Gottlieb, the African slaves on the island of St. Croix responded to the signal of the blowing of conch shells by leaving their plantations to converge on Fort Frederik in the town of Frederiksted;

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Whereas in Frederiksted the African slaves demanded their freedom and threatened to destroy the island by fire unless it was granted by 4 o'clock that afternoon;

Whereas, confronted by reports of arson and insurrection, the Danish governor, Peter von Scholten, met the African slaves in Frederiksted and declared that "all unfree in the Danish West Indies are from today free";

Whereas the heroes of this rebellion paid a high price, General Budhoe being sent into exile, and Governor von Scholten being convicted in Denmark of dereliction of duty and of exceeding his authority;

Whereas July 3 of each year is designated as Emancipation Day in the United States Virgin Islands to commemorate the 1848 emancipation of African slaves and its significance in the history of the islands and the United States;

Whereas the annual observance of Emancipation Day on July 3 and National Independence Day on July 4 serves to connect Virgin Islanders and all Americans to their past and to reinforce their unwavering commitment to preserve, protect, and defend human rights and freedom; and

Whereas July 3, 1998, will be the 150th anniversary of the dramatic and inspiring emancipation of African slaves that is celebrated each July 3: Now, therefore, be it

1        *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*  
2 *concurring), That the Congress recognizes—*

3            (1) the historic significance of the 150th anni-  
4        versary of the emancipation of African slaves in  
5        what is now the United States Virgin Islands; and

1           (2) that, as loyal citizens of the United States  
2           since 1917, the descendants of those who were freed  
3           have contributed significantly to the Nation.

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