

House Resolution 947

By: Representatives Gilliard of the 162<sup>nd</sup>, Stephens of the 164<sup>th</sup>, Jackson of the 165<sup>th</sup>, and Westbrook of the 163<sup>rd</sup>

### A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the Weeping Time Cultural Heritage Corridor as an official cultural and historic  
2 corridor in Georgia; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the largest sale of Enslaved Africans in American history occurred on March 2  
4 and 3, 1859, on the western side of Savannah, Georgia, where 429 Enslaved Africans from  
5 the Butler Island Plantation were torn apart from their families and scattered across this  
6 country to pay off a gambling debt and maintain the wealth of the Butler Island Plantation  
7 owners; and

8 WHEREAS, during the two-day auction, national newspapers recorded that torrential rain  
9 occurred from the beginning of the sale until the very last slave was sold, thus it is called  
10 "The Weeping Time"; and

11 WHEREAS, Fanny Kemble, the ex-wife of Pearce Butler, the Butler Island Plantation owner,  
12 wrote of the horrific event in her book, *Journey of a Residence on a Georgia Plantation*, and  
13 as an abolitionist, her account is said to have had influence in the start of the American Civil  
14 War; and

15 WHEREAS, this major historical site includes the pathway of "Sherman's March to the Sea"  
16 which occurred December 20 and 21, 1864, on routes from Port Wentworth, Georgia through  
17 West Savannah, finally arriving at 3 West Bay Street, City Hall; and

18 WHEREAS, the Weeping Time property is now located along Augusta Avenue in the West  
19 Savannah, Woodville, and Hudson Hill neighborhoods of Savannah, Georgia; and

20 WHEREAS, millions of African Americans across the country can trace their lineage to "The  
21 Weeping Time" event; and

22 WHEREAS, it would be beneficial to establish a specific cultural and historic corridor in this  
23 state, and such corridor would directly foster the cultural and historic resources of this state;  
24 and

25 WHEREAS, it would be advantageous for official corridors to be established for the pursuit  
26 of state and federal grants; and

27 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia will collaborate on the "Weeping Time Cultural Heritage  
28 Corridor" of historic African American communities adjacent to the Weeping Time property  
29 to properly honor the remaining "Weeping Time Cultural Heritage Corridor" in an  
30 innovative, safe, and beautiful manner; and

31 WHEREAS, the Weeping Time Corridor will educate and promote Gullah Geechee art,  
32 history, culture to include its folkways, foodways, environmental rights, and spiritual rights  
33 to create cultural heritage tourism community opportunities; and

34 WHEREAS, the Weeping Time Cultural Heritage Corridor will provide community resource

35 linkages to institutions of higher learning, scholars, professors, and K–12 schools to enhance  
36 their learning, and these experiences will provide citizens and visitors from around the nation  
37 and world an opportunity to walk along the footsteps of living history, and they will  
38 experience the African American and Gullah Geechee journey from slavery to freedom on  
39 the coast of Georgia with a focus on truth, reconciliation, healing, and repair of the atrocities  
40 of this era in American history; and

41 WHEREAS, the "Weeping Time Cultural Heritage Corridor" is an integral part of the 2006  
42 federally established "Gullah Geechee Heritage Corridor" along Georgia's great Coastal  
43 Empire.

44 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
45 GEORGIA that the Weeping Time Cultural Heritage Corridor shall be composed of the area  
46 along Augusta Avenue in West Savannah, along with the Woodville and Hudson Hill  
47 neighborhoods of Savannah, Georgia.

48 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of this body designate the Weeping Time  
49 Cultural Heritage Corridor as an official cultural and historic corridor in the State of Georgia.

50 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized  
51 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the  
52 public and the press.