

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 208

By Summerville

A RESOLUTION to create an ad hoc committee to study the historical accuracy of language included on the Middle Passage plaque.

WHEREAS, on April 5, 1999, Senate Joint Resolution No. 20 of the First Extraordinary Session of the One Hundred First General Assembly achieved final passage and was signed by the Governor on April 12, 1999; and

WHEREAS, Senate Joint Resolution No. 20 expressed the General Assembly's support for the placement of a plaque on the lawn of the Tennessee State Capitol to honor the Africans who died during the Middle Passage; and

WHEREAS, on May 7, 1999, the Capitol Commission authorized the placement of a suitable plaque and marker on the State Capitol grounds for such purpose; and

WHEREAS, in the intervening years, questions have arisen concerning the historical accuracy of several of the statements presented as facts on the Middle Passage plaque; and

WHEREAS, in commemorating historical persons and events, it is imperative that this General Assembly ensure the historical accuracy of all information presented to the public as being factual; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that there is hereby created an ad hoc committee to study the language included on the Middle Passage plaque located on the State Capitol grounds, with a view toward determining the historical accuracy of such language or portions thereof.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the ad hoc committee shall consist of three (3) members, to be constituted as follows:

One (1) member shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

One (1) member shall be appointed by the Speaker of the Senate; and

One (1) member shall be appointed by the Capitol Commission.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all appropriate state agencies shall provide assistance to the ad hoc committee upon request of the chair.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all legislative members of the ad hoc committee who are duly elected members of the General Assembly, if any, shall remain members of such committee until the committee reports its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that non-legislative members shall serve without compensation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the ad hoc committee shall be convened by the member appointed by the Speaker of the Senate, and at its first meeting shall elect a chair, vice-chair, and such other officers the committee deems necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the ad hoc committee shall commence its work no later than July 1, 2013, and timely report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the One Hundred Eighth General Assembly no later than September 30, 2013, at which time the committee shall cease to exist.