

No. R-57. House concurrent resolution recognizing the importance of the Black Lives Matter Movement in the U.S. and Vermont Black communities.

(H.C.R.38)

Offered by: Representatives Christie of Hartford, Gonzalez of Winooski, Morris of Bennington, Ancel of Calais, Botzow of Pownal, Briglin of Thetford, Brumsted of Shelburne, Buckholz of Hartford, Burke of Brattleboro, Chesnut-Tangerman of Middletown Springs, Cina of Burlington, Colburn of Burlington, Conlon of Cornwall, Conquest of Newbury, Dakin of Colchester, Dunn of Essex, Emmons of Springfield, Fields of Bennington, Gannon of Wilmington, Grad of Moretown, Haas of Rochester, Head of South Burlington, Houghton of Essex, Joseph of North Hero, Lanpher of Vergennes, Lippert of Hinesburg, Long of Newfane, Lucke of Hartford, Macaig of Williston, Masland of Thetford, McCullough of Williston, Mrowicki of Putney, Murphy of Fairfax, O'Sullivan of Burlington, Pugh of South Burlington, Rachelson of Burlington, Scheu of Middlebury, Sheldon of Middlebury, Sibia of Dover, Squirrell of Underhill, Stevens of Waterbury, Stuart of Brattleboro, Sullivan of Dorset, Sullivan of Burlington, Till of Jericho, Townsend of South Burlington, Troiano of Stannard, Walz of Barre City, Weed of Enosburgh, Wood of Waterbury, and Yantachka of Charlotte

Offered by: Senators Brooks, Balint, Baruth, Campion, Clarkson, and Pollina

Whereas, the murder of Trayvon Martin on February 26, 2012 in Florida sparked outrage in the Black community, and

Whereas, a strong perception following this homicide that the nation placed a low value on the lives of Black Americans led Alicia Garza, Opal Tometi, and Patrisse Cullors to form the Black Lives Matter movement (BLM), and

Whereas, BLM was formed to affirm Black Americans' humanity and resilience in the face of deadly oppression, and

Whereas, the killing of Michael Brown, 18 years of age, in Ferguson, Missouri, on August 9, 2014, ignited major growth in BLM, and

Whereas, the deaths of at least 250 unarmed Black Americans in 2016 reaffirmed the continuing crisis in the relationship between Black Americans and law enforcement officials, and

Whereas, BLM's literature states, "Black Lives Matter Vermont is a growing network of individuals, families and businesses invested in the liberation of Black Vermonters, and the deactivation of systemic racism endured by all people of color in our state," and

Whereas, the repeated incidents of violence against Black Americans have demonstrated the core reason that BLM was established, and

Whereas, BLM supporters in Vermont, who include members of all races, have stood in solidarity with this nationwide movement, and

Whereas, according to the U.S. Census, as of July 1, 2015 only 1.3 percent of Vermonters are Black, and they still face discrimination in many aspects of their daily lives, and

Whereas, the General Assembly has acknowledged the problems Black Vermonters encounter with public safety officials, and in 2012 (Act 134) and 2014 (Act 193), the General Assembly enacted legislation leading to the establishment of bias-free policing policies, and a greater law enforcement awareness and readiness to adopt those policies, and

Whereas, the Vermont Black Lives Matter movement has spurred a continuing dialogue to ensure that all Vermonters are guaranteed fundamental civil rights and equality, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly recognizes the importance of the Black Lives Matter Movement in the U.S. and Vermont Black communities, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Shela Linton, Ebony Nyoni, and Mark Hughes.