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## ISSUE UPDATE

**DATE:** June 19, 2009  
**TO:** Concerned Parties  
**FROM:** Hilary O. Shelton, Director, Washington Bureau



# **U.S. Senate Passes Legislation Apologizing for the Horrors of Slavery, Jim Crow and Continuing Racism**

## ***RESOLUTION ALSO CITES CONTINUING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF TRANSATLANTIC SLAVERY TRADE ON AFRICAN AMERICANS TODAY***

### **THE ISSUE:**

On Thursday, June 18 2009 the United States Senate passed, by a unanimous vote, S. Con. Res. 26, a concurrent resolution apologizing for the enslavement and continuing racial segregation of African Americans. This resolution was significant for several reasons, including the fact that it addressed not only slavery also but the “separate but equal” and other deplorable elements of the Jim Crow era and the problems associated with racism that continue to plague our Nation even today.

This legislation is a significant first step in recognizing a very important aspect of American’s history and recommitting ourselves to bringing about an end to the disparities and injustices that plague our Nation as a result of the dehumanization of an entire race. In passing this resolution, the United States Senate has sent a message to all of the American people and others that the most powerful nation in the world is willing to look honestly at some of the most shameful parts of its history, accept responsibility, and apologize for its actions.

The concurrent resolution was co-authored by Senators Tom Harkin (Iowa) and Sam Brownback (Kansas) and by Congressman Steven Cohen (TN) and others in the House. The U.S. House is scheduled to take up the resolution next week. The NAACP also strongly supports H.R. 40, legislation introduced by Congressman John Conyers (MI) to take the next step toward healing our Nation by addressing and seeking remedy for the lingering effects of this dehumanizing institution.

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