



MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE

**SUPERVISOR, FOURTH DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: July 16, 2024

14

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO TO SUPPORT THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS' 2024 REPARATIONS LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

California's involvement in slavery is an often-overlooked aspect of its history. Although California did not enter the Union as a slave state, slavery did exist within its borders. The Gold Rush era brought an influx of settlers, including slaveholders from the Southern states, leading to the presence of enslaved African Americans in California. Even though the California Constitution of 1849 banned slavery, the state's economy and legal system were intertwined with the broader institution of slavery in the United States through trade, economic ties, and legal precedent.

Even after slavery was legally abolished in 1865, government institutions at all levels continued to enforce segregation and discriminatory practices that marginalized African Americans. This systemic oppression denied them of opportunities for economic advancement, equal education, and access to adequate healthcare. As a result, many African Americans faced enduring hardships that disproportionately affected their socio-economic status and overall well-being.

Assembly Bill 3121 established California's Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans (Reparations Task Force). The Reparations Task Force researched the historical injustices inflicted upon African Americans in California and provided 150 recommendations on how the state should address the enduring impacts of slavery, systemic racism, and discriminatory policies.

After reviewing the Reparations Task Force's recommendations, the California Legislative Black Caucus introduced the 2024 Reparations Legislative Package consisting of 14 bills in the areas of Education (AB 1929, AB 3131), Civil Rights (ACA 7, ACR 135, AB 1815, SB 1050, AB 3089), Criminal Justice Reform (ACA 8, AB 1986, AB 2064, AB 280), Health (AB 1975, SB 1089), and Business (AB 2862).

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This Board Letter requests the San Diego County Board of Supervisors to approve a resolution to support the 2024 Reparations Legislative Package introduced by the California Legislative Black Caucus.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

SUPERVISOR MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE

- ~~1. Adopt the resolution entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO TO SUPPORT THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS' 2024 REPARATIONS LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE~~
- ~~2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to express the County's support for the 2024 Reparations Legislative Package consisting of AB 280, AB 1815, AB 1929, AB 1975, AB 1986, AB 2064, AB 2862, AB 3089, ACA 7, ACA 8, ACR 135, SB 1050, and SB 1089, consistent with Board Policy M-2.~~

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The 2024 Reparations Legislative Package represents a pivotal step towards equity, justice, and inclusivity. The County of San Diego's support of the 2024 Reparations Legislative Package demonstrates a commitment to rectifying historical injustices and addressing systemic disparities that continue to affect African American communities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Supporting the 2024 Reparations Legislative Package will further the County of San Diego's Sustainability Goals by advocating for equity and justice for all San Diegans. Promoting justice and equity for all residents supports long-term social and economic sustainability.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

THIS ITEM HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN AT THE REQUEST OF SUPERVISOR MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

N/A

BACKGROUND

Although California did not enter the Union in 1850 as a slave state, slavery did exist within its borders. The Gold Rush era brought an influx of settlers, including slaveholders from the Southern states, leading to the presence of enslaved African Americans in California. Slaveholders from other states were permitted under certain legal provisions to bring enslaved African Americans

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into California on a temporary basis. These enslaved African Americans were brought to California primarily to work in the burgeoning gold mines, which were central to the state's rapid economic growth during the Gold Rush era. This historical context shows the complex and often contradictory realities of slavery in California during the 1850s, challenging the state's image as solely a haven for freedom seekers.

Even after slavery was legally abolished in 1865, government institutions at all levels continued to enforce segregation and discriminatory practices that marginalized African Americans. This systemic oppression denied them of opportunities for economic advancement, equal education, and access to adequate healthcare. As a result, many African Americans faced enduring hardships that disproportionately affected their socio-economic status and overall well-being.

Acknowledging this history is crucial to understanding contemporary racial disparities and addressing ongoing challenges related to racial justice and equality. It underscores the need for deliberate efforts to dismantle systemic racism and promote inclusive policies that rectify historical injustices and ensure equitable opportunities for all people.

Assembly Bill 3121 (AB 3121) was enacted on September 30, 2020, and established the California Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans (Reparations Task Force). AB 3121 represented a significant legislative effort to recognize the enduring impact of slavery on African Americans and to foster reconciliation and equity. The Reparations Task Force studied California's legacy of slavery and its ongoing detrimental effects, specifically targeting living African Americans who are descendants of enslaved individuals.

The Reparations Task Force also recommended appropriate forms of rehabilitation and restitution that could mitigate the socio-economic and cultural disparities that persist because of slavery. The Reparations Task Force did this by following the reparations model adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, which includes five types of reparations: restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and non-repetition. Restitution focuses on restoring rights, property and dignity that were unjustly taken. Compensation involves monetary payments. Rehabilitation aims to provide services such as healthcare and education to mitigate ongoing harms. Satisfaction involves acknowledging the suffering and experiences of victims through official apologies. Guarantees of non-repetition aim to prevent future injustices by addressing system issues and implementing structural reforms. The Reparations Task Force issued its report to the California Legislature on June 29, 2023.

Based on the Reparations Task Force's report, the California Legislative Black Caucus introduced the 2024 Reparations Legislative Package, which consists of 14 bills in the areas of Education (AB 1929), Civil Rights (ACA 7, ACR 135, AB 1815, SB 1050, AB 3089), Criminal Justice Reform (ACA 8, AB 1986, AB 2064, AB 280), Health (AB 1975, SB 1089) and Business (AB 2862), on January 31, 2024.

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At this time, 13 bills¹ from the 2024 Reparations Legislative Package are progressing steadily through committee reviews and are expected to head to the State Senate. Each bill addresses crucial facets of reparative justice, encompassing restitution, educational initiatives, and community investment. The collaborative efforts across party lines indicate bipartisan support for advancing these measures to comprehensively address historical injustices.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's proposed action aligns with the Equity and Empower Strategic Initiatives in the County of San Diego's 2024-2029 Strategic Plan. While the 2024 Reparations Legislative Package focuses on statewide measures, it can also serve as a valuable framework to foster greater equity and inclusion for San Diego County to integrate into its Strategic Plan.

Respectfully submitted,



MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE
Supervisor, Fourth District

ATTACHMENT(S)

ATTACHMENT A: A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO TO SUPPORT THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS' 2024 REPARATIONS LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE

¹ At this time, ACA 7 is not advancing to the State Senate.