

By Senator Wilson

33-925-06

See HB

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Senate Resolution

A resolution of apology to the victims of lynching in this state and the descendants of those victims for the Senate's part in the past failure of the Florida Legislature to enact legislation that might have prevented those lynchings.

WHEREAS, the crime of lynching succeeded slavery as the ultimate expression of racism in the United States following Reconstruction, and

WHEREAS, lynching was a widely acknowledged practice in the United States until the middle of the 20th century, occurring in documented incidents in all but four states, and

WHEREAS, at least 4,742 people, predominately African Americans, were reported as being lynched in the United States between 1882 and 1968, and

WHEREAS, at least 280 people, predominately African Americans, were reported as being lynched in Florida between 1882 and 1968, and

WHEREAS, 99 percent of all perpetrators of lynching escaped punishment by state or local officials, and

WHEREAS, lynching prompted African Americans to form the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and prompted members of B'nai B'rith to found the Anti-Defamation League, and

WHEREAS, the recent publication of "Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America" has helped to bring greater awareness and proper recognition to the victims of lynching, and

1           WHEREAS, it is only by coming to terms with history  
2 that the United States can effectively champion human rights  
3 abroad, and

4           WHEREAS, in 2005, the United States Senate passed  
5 Senate Resolution 39, which apologizes to the victims of  
6 lynching for the failure of the United States Senate to enact  
7 anti-lynching legislation, expresses its sympathies and  
8 regrets to the descendants of lynching victims, and remembers  
9 the history of lynching to ensure that the tragedies  
10 surrounding those crimes will be neither forgotten nor  
11 repeated, and

12           WHEREAS, an apology offered in the spirit of true  
13 repentance will move the United States toward reconciliation  
14 and will become central to a new understanding on which  
15 improved racial relations can be forged, NOW, THEREFORE,

16  
17 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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19           That the Florida Senate apologizes and expresses its  
20 deepest sympathies and most solemn regrets to the victims of  
21 lynching in this state and the descendants of those victims  
22 for its part in the past failure of the Florida Legislature to  
23 enact legislation that might have prevented those tragedies in  
24 which the victims were deprived of life, human dignity, and  
25 the constitutional protections accorded all citizens of the  
26 United States.