

110TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. RES. 84

Observing February 23, 2007, as the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire, honoring the distinguished life and legacy of William Wilberforce, and encouraging the people of the United States to follow the example of William Wilberforce by selflessly pursuing respect for human rights around the world.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 15, 2007

Mr. BROWNBACK (for himself, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. COBURN, and Mr. ENSIGN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

MARCH 1, 2007

Reported by Mr. LEAHY, without amendment

MARCH 23, 2007

Considered and agreed to

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## RESOLUTION

Observing February 23, 2007, as the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire, honoring the distinguished life and legacy of William Wilberforce, and encouraging the people of the United States to follow the example of William Wilberforce by selflessly pursuing respect for human rights around the world.

Whereas, at the age of 21, William Wilberforce was elected to the House of Commons of Great Britain;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce and his colleagues actively engaged in many initiatives with the sole purpose of renewing British culture at the turn of the 19th century in order to bring about positive social change;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce advocated prison reform that equally respected justice and human dignity, and encouraged reconciliation;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce sought to improve the conditions for, and minimize the use of, child laborers;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce dedicated his life to ending the British slave trade and the abolition of slavery despite forceful opposition;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce was mentored by former slave trader and author of the hymn “Amazing Grace,” John Newton, on the horrors and inhumanity of the slave trade;

Whereas approximately 11,000,000 human beings were captured and taken from Africa to the Western Hemisphere to be sold as commodities and forced into slavery and bondage;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce fought for 20 years in the House of Commons to pass legislation banning the slave trade;

Whereas, on February 23, 1807, Parliament passed a bill banning the slave trade in the British Empire as a direct result of the efforts of Mr. Wilberforce;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce inspired and encouraged those who opposed slavery in the United States, including political leaders like John Quincy Adams, and spread a message of hope and freedom throughout the United States;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce labored for 46 years to abolish the institution of slavery in the British Empire, ceaselessly defending those without a voice in society;

Whereas, in 1833, Mr. Wilberforce was informed on his death bed that the House of Commons had voted to abolish slavery altogether;

Whereas section 102(a) of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7101(a)) states that human trafficking is “a contemporary manifestation of slavery whose victims are predominantly women and children”;

Whereas the scourge of human slavery continues to pollute our world and assault human dignity and freedom;

Whereas, in 2006, the United States Department of State estimated that between 600,000 and 800,000 men, women, and children were trafficked across international borders for use as bonded laborers or sex slaves, or for other nefarious purposes;

Whereas the International Labour Organization estimates that there are more than 12,000,000 people in forced labor, bonded labor, forced child labor, and sexual servitude around the world, a number that is greater than the number of slaves that existed at the time of Mr. Wilberforce’s death;

Whereas all people must continue to fight, as Mr. Wilberforce fought, for the true abolition of slavery and for respect for human dignity in all aspects of modern culture; and

Whereas the people of the United States should carry on the legacy of William Wilberforce by working to end the modern slave trade, human trafficking, and the degradation of human dignity: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2               (1) observes February 23, 2007, as the 200th  
3 anniversary of the ban of the slave trade in the Brit-  
4 ish Empire;

5               (2) recognizes the positive impact William Wil-  
6 berforce had on renewing the culture of his day and  
7 ending the inhumane practice of human slavery;

8               (3) commends to the people of the United  
9 States the example of William Wilberforce and his  
10 commitment to the values of inherent human dignity  
11 and freedom, which reside in each and every human  
12 being;

13              (4) encourages the people of the United States  
14 to—

15                   (A) observe the 200th anniversary of the  
16 ban of the slave trade in the British Empire;

17                   (B) reflect on William Wilberforce’s self-  
18 less dedication to the fight against slavery and  
19 his commitment to the neediest in society; and

20                   (C) commit themselves to recognize the  
21 value of human life and human dignity; and

22               (5) unequivocally condemns all forms of human  
23 trafficking and slavery, which are an assault on

1 human dignity that William Wilberforce would  
2 steadfastly resist.

