

HOUSE BILL No. 6203

June 14, 2006, Introduced by Reps. Murphy, Virgil Smith, Lemmons, III, Clack, Farrah, Gillard, Accavitti, Miller, Bennett, Vagnozzi, Cushingberry, Sheltroun, Zelenko, Tobocman, Plakas, Waters, Gleason and Lemmons, Jr. and referred to the Committee on Government Operations.

A bill to amend 2001 PA 63, entitled
"History, arts, and libraries act,"
(MCL 399.701 to 399.722) by adding section 13.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 SEC. 13. (1) THE LEGISLATURE FINDS AND DECLARES THAT ALL
2 PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW OF AND REMEMBER THE HUMAN CARNAGE AND
3 DEHUMANIZING ATROCITIES COMMITTED DURING THE PERIOD OF THE AFRICAN
4 SLAVE TRADE AND SLAVERY IN AMERICA AND THE VESTIGES OF SLAVERY IN
5 THIS COUNTRY. IT IS VITAL TO EDUCATE THE CITIZENS OF THIS STATE ON
6 THESE EVENTS, THE LEGACY OF SLAVERY, THE SAD HISTORY OF RACISM IN
7 THIS COUNTRY, AND THE PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DIGNITY IN A
8 CIVILIZED SOCIETY. THE LEGISLATURE DETERMINES THAT THE HISTORY OF
9 THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, SLAVERY IN AMERICA, THE DEPTH OF THEIR
10 IMPACT ON OUR SOCIETY, AND THE TRIUMPHS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS AND

1 THEIR SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS COUNTRY
2 ARE THE PROPER CONCERN OF ALL PEOPLE.

3 (2) IT IS THEREFORE DESIRABLE TO CREATE A COMMISSION THAT, AS
4 AN ORGANIZED BODY AND ON A CONTINUOUS BASIS, WILL SURVEY, DESIGN,
5 ENCOURAGE, AND PROMOTE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATION AND
6 AWARENESS PROGRAMS IN THIS STATE THAT ARE CONCERNED WITH THE
7 AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, SLAVERY IN AMERICA, THE VESTIGES OF SLAVERY IN
8 THIS COUNTRY, AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN
9 BUILDING OUR COUNTRY; THAT WILL DEVELOP WORKSHOPS, INSTITUTES,
10 SEMINARS, AND OTHER TEACHER TRAINING ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO EDUCATE
11 TEACHERS ON THIS SUBJECT MATTER; AND THAT WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR
12 THE COORDINATION OF EVENTS ON A REGULAR BASIS, THROUGHOUT THE
13 STATE, THAT PROVIDE APPROPRIATE MEMORIALIZATION OF THE EVENTS
14 CONCERNING THE ENSLAVEMENT OF AFRICANS AND THEIR DESCENDANTS IN
15 AMERICA AND THEIR STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM, LIBERTY, AND EQUALITY.

16 (3) THE AMISTAD COMMISSION IS CREATED WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT.
17 THE COMMISSION IS NAMED TO HONOR THE GROUP OF ENSLAVED AFRICANS
18 TRANSPORTED IN 1839 ON A VESSEL NAMED THE AMISTAD WHO OVERTHREW
19 THEIR CAPTORS AND CREATED AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT THAT WAS
20 EVENTUALLY ARGUED BEFORE THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT AND THAT
21 SHED A GROWING LIGHT ON THE EVILS OF THE SLAVE TRADE AND GALVANIZED
22 A GROWING ABOLITIONIST MOVEMENT TOWARD DEMANDING THE END OF SLAVERY
23 IN THE UNITED STATES.

24 (4) THE COMMISSION SHALL CONSIST OF 15 MEMBERS, INCLUDING 3 EX
25 OFFICIO MEMBERS: THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION OR HIS OR
26 HER DESIGNEE, THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND ECONOMIC
27 GROWTH OR HIS OR HER DESIGNEE, AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT

1 OR HIS OR HER DESIGNEE; AND 12 PUBLIC MEMBERS. PUBLIC MEMBERS SHALL
2 BE APPOINTED AS FOLLOWS:

3 (A) TWO MEMBERS SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE SENATE MAJORITY
4 LEADER, AND 1 MEMBER SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE SENATE MINORITY
5 LEADER.

6 (B) TWO MEMBERS SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
7 OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND 1 MEMBER SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE MINORITY
8 LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

9 (C) SIX MEMBERS, NO MORE THAN 3 OF WHOM SHALL BE FROM THE SAME
10 POLITICAL PARTY, SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR.

11 (5) THE PUBLIC MEMBERS SHALL BE RESIDENTS OF THIS STATE,
12 CHOSEN WITH DUE REGARD TO BROAD GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION AND
13 ETHNIC DIVERSITY, WHO HAVE SERVED ACTIVELY IN ORGANIZATIONS THAT
14 EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ON THE HISTORY OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, THE
15 CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS TO OUR SOCIETY, AND CIVIL RIGHTS
16 ISSUES.

17 (6) EACH PUBLIC MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION SHALL SERVE FOR A
18 TERM OF 3 YEARS, EXCEPT THAT, OF THE MEMBERS FIRST APPOINTED, 1
19 MEMBER APPOINTED BY THE SENATE MAJORITY LEADER, 1 MEMBER APPOINTED
20 BY THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND 2 MEMBERS
21 APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR SHALL SERVE FOR TERMS OF 1 YEAR; THE
22 MEMBER APPOINTED BY THE SENATE MINORITY LEADER, 1 MEMBER APPOINTED
23 BY THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND 2 MEMBERS
24 APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR SHALL SERVE FOR TERMS OF 2 YEARS; AND 1
25 MEMBER APPOINTED BY THE SENATE MAJORITY LEADER, THE MEMBER
26 APPOINTED BY THE MINORITY LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
27 AND 2 MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR SHALL SERVE FOR TERMS OF 3

1 YEARS. PUBLIC MEMBERS SHALL BE ELIGIBLE FOR REAPPOINTMENT. THEY
2 SHALL SERVE UNTIL THEIR SUCCESSORS ARE APPOINTED AND QUALIFIED. A
3 VACANCY OCCURRING OTHER THAN BY EXPIRATION OF TERM SHALL BE FILLED
4 IN THE SAME MANNER AS THE ORIGINAL APPOINTMENT FOR THE BALANCE OF
5 THE UNEXPIRED TERM.

6 (7) AT ITS FIRST MEETING AND ANNUALLY THEREAFTER, THE
7 COMMISSION SHALL ELECT FROM AMONG ITS MEMBERS A CHAIRPERSON AND
8 OTHER OFFICERS IT CONSIDERS NECESSARY OR APPROPRIATE. AFTER ITS
9 FIRST MEETING, THE COMMISSION SHALL MEET AT LEAST QUARTERLY, OR
10 MORE FREQUENTLY AT THE CALL OF THE CHAIRPERSON OR IF REQUESTED BY 9
11 OR MORE MEMBERS. A MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION
12 CONSTITUTE A QUORUM FOR THE TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS AT A MEETING OF
13 THE COMMISSION. A MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS PRESENT AND SERVING ARE
14 REQUIRED FOR OFFICIAL ACTION OF THE COMMISSION.

15 (8) ALL BUSINESS THAT THE COMMISSION IS AUTHORIZED TO PERFORM
16 SHALL BE CONDUCTED AT A PUBLIC MEETING OF THE COMMISSION, HELD IN
17 COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT, 1976 PA 267, MCL 15.261 TO
18 15.275. A WRITING PREPARED, OWNED, USED, IN THE POSSESSION OF, OR
19 RETAINED BY THE COMMISSION IN THE PERFORMANCE OF AN OFFICIAL
20 FUNCTION IS SUBJECT TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT, 1976 PA 442,
21 MCL 15.231 TO 15.246.

22 (9) THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION SHALL SERVE WITHOUT
23 COMPENSATION BUT SHALL BE ENTITLED TO REIMBURSEMENT FOR ALL
24 NECESSARY EXPENSES INCURRED IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR OFFICIAL
25 DUTIES AS MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION FROM FUNDS APPROPRIATED FOR
26 THAT PURPOSE. REIMBURSEMENT FOR TRAVEL, MEALS, AND LODGING SHALL BE
27 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STATE STANDARDIZED TRAVEL RULES OF THE

1 DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET.

2 (10) THE COMMISSION SHALL HAVE THE FOLLOWING RESPONSIBILITIES
3 AND DUTIES:

4 (A) TO PROVIDE, BASED UPON THE COLLECTIVE INTEREST OF THE
5 MEMBERS AND THE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE OF THE MEMBERS, ASSISTANCE
6 AND ADVICE TO SCHOOLS WITHIN THIS STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE
7 IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATION, AWARENESS PROGRAMS, TEXTBOOKS, AND
8 EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS CONCERNED WITH THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE,
9 SLAVERY IN AMERICA, THE VESTIGES OF SLAVERY IN THIS COUNTRY, AND
10 THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS TO OUR SOCIETY.

11 (B) TO SURVEY AND CATALOG THE EXTENT AND BREADTH OF EDUCATION
12 CONCERNING THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, SLAVERY IN AMERICA, THE
13 VESTIGES OF SLAVERY IN THIS COUNTRY, AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF
14 AFRICAN-AMERICANS TO OUR SOCIETY PRESENTLY BEING INCORPORATED INTO
15 THE CURRICULA AND TEXTBOOKS AND TAUGHT IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS OF
16 THIS STATE; TO INVENTORY THOSE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, AMERICAN
17 SLAVERY, OR RELEVANT AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY MEMORIALS, EXHIBITS,
18 AND RESOURCES THAT SHOULD BE INCORPORATED INTO COURSES OF STUDY AT
19 EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, SCHOOLS, AND VARIOUS OTHER LOCATIONS
20 THROUGHOUT THIS STATE; AND TO ASSIST THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
21 AND OTHER STATE AGENCIES AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE
22 DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, AMERICAN
23 SLAVERY, AND AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

24 (C) TO ACT AS A LIAISON WITH TEXTBOOK PUBLISHERS, SCHOOLS,
25 PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND NONPROFIT RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS, MEMBERS OF
26 THE UNITED STATES SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND THE
27 SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THIS STATE IN ORDER TO

1 FACILITATE THE INCLUSION OF THE HISTORY OF AFRICAN SLAVERY AND OF
2 AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN THIS COUNTRY IN THE CURRICULA OF PUBLIC AND
3 NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS.

4 (D) TO COMPILE A ROSTER OF INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE
5 WILLING TO SHARE THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE IN CLASSROOMS,
6 SEMINARS, AND WORKSHOPS WITH STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ON THE SUBJECT
7 OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, AMERICAN SLAVERY, THE IMPACT OF SLAVERY
8 ON OUR SOCIETY TODAY, AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS TO
9 OUR COUNTRY.

10 (E) TO COORDINATE EVENTS MEMORIALIZING THE AFRICAN SLAVE
11 TRADE, AMERICAN SLAVERY, AND THE HISTORY OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN
12 THIS COUNTRY THAT REFLECT THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN
13 OVERCOMING THE BURDENS OF SLAVERY AND ITS VESTIGES AND TO SEEK
14 VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE WILLING AND ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN COMMEMORATIVE
15 EVENTS THAT WILL ENHANCE STUDENT AWARENESS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF
16 THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, AMERICAN SLAVERY, ITS HISTORICAL IMPACT,
17 AND THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM.

18 (F) TO DEVELOP, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE STATE BOARD OF
19 EDUCATION, CURRICULUM GUIDELINES THAT WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO
20 EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR THE TEACHING OF INFORMATION ON THE AFRICAN
21 SLAVE TRADE, SLAVERY IN AMERICA, THE VESTIGES OF SLAVERY IN THIS
22 COUNTRY, AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS TO OUR COUNTRY.

23 (G) TO SOLICIT, RECEIVE, AND ACCEPT GRANTS, GIFTS, AND
24 DONATIONS FOR COMMISSION OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED UNDER
25 THIS SECTION.

26 (H) TO PREPARE AN ANNUAL REPORT BY MARCH 1 FOR THE GOVERNOR
27 AND THE LEGISLATURE REGARDING ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON

1 FACILITATING THE INCLUSION OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, AMERICAN
2 SLAVERY STUDIES, AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY, AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS IN
3 THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF THE STATE.

4 (11) THE COMMISSION MAY CALL UPON ANY DEPARTMENT, OFFICE,
5 DIVISION, OR AGENCY OF THIS STATE, OR OF ANY COUNTY, MUNICIPALITY,
6 OR SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE STATE, TO SUPPLY THE DATA, PROGRAM
7 REPORTS, AND OTHER INFORMATION AND OTHER ASSISTANCE IT CONSIDERS
8 NECESSARY TO DISCHARGE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THIS ACT.

9 (12) THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SHALL:

10 (A) ASSIST THE AMISTAD COMMISSION IN MARKETING AND
11 DISTRIBUTING TO EDUCATORS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN
12 THE STATE EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION AND OTHER MATERIALS ON THE
13 AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, SLAVERY IN AMERICA, THE VESTIGES OF SLAVERY IN
14 THIS COUNTRY, AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS TO OUR
15 SOCIETY.

16 (B) CONDUCT AT LEAST 1 TEACHER WORKSHOP ANNUALLY ON THE
17 AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE, SLAVERY IN AMERICA, THE VESTIGES OF SLAVERY IN
18 THIS COUNTRY, AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS TO OUR
19 SOCIETY.

20 (C) ASSIST THE AMISTAD COMMISSION IN MONITORING THE INCLUSION
21 OF SLAVERY MATERIALS AND CURRICULA IN THE STATE'S EDUCATIONAL
22 SYSTEM.

23 (D) CONSULT WITH THE AMISTAD COMMISSION TO DETERMINE WAYS IT
24 MAY SURVEY, CATALOG, AND EXTEND SLAVE TRADE AND AMERICAN SLAVERY
25 EDUCATION PRESENTLY BEING TAUGHT IN THE STATE'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.