

WHEREAS, There are various accounts of information about the first voyages to the island; one indicates that the first ship that departed from the U.S. coast to Hispaniola was the Charlotte Gray, which left the Philadelphia seashore on August 23, 1824, with 58 free slaves on board; other ship names include DeWitt Clinton, Unity, Strong and Tybee; all left from the eastern coast of the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, Between 1824 and 1825, over 6,000 free slaves from the United States found home in many different locations on the island; and

WHEREAS, The new settlers were offered equal rights and were given land; upon arrival, many settlers were able to preserve their English language, culture, ingrained religious belief and cohesiveness via their African Methodist Episcopal Church; and

WHEREAS, The African-American migratory experience in Hispaniola has translated into many contributions to Dominican culture; African-Americans and descendants have historically been majority in Samana; today, they make up over 80 percent of Samana's population; and

WHEREAS, Our American history greatly benefited from the generosity given by the island of Hispaniola and other Latin American sites, which united for the cause of improving the quality of life for 6,000 free slaves; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to recognize the 1824-1825 migration of the 6,000 free American slaves to the island of Hispaniola; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Nestor Montilla, Associate Director, International Programs and Community Relations, Hostos Community College of the City University of New York; Ana I. Garcia Reyes, Director, International Programs and Community Relations, Hostos Community College of the City University of New York; Anne Pope, Director, African American Institute; Reverend Benito Jones, African Methodist Church; Martha Willmore, Educator, Dominican descendant of African American settlers; Franklyn Willmore, Dominican descendant of African American settlers; Samana's Governor Dr. Wilson Forchue; Samana's Senator Lic. Ramiro Espino; Samana's Mayor Domingo Carrasco; Congressman Nelson Nunez; and Congressman Jorge Esquea.

ADOPTED IN ASSEMBLY ON
February 13, 2006

By order of the Assembly,



June Egeland
June Egeland, Clerk