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# NEWS

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## ***Slavery Apology to be introduced***

A resolution offering an apology for the Annapolis city government's involvement in slavery will be introduced by Alderman Sam Shropshire at a legislative session of the Annapolis City Council on Monday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. According to Shropshire, "This is a statement that is long overdue from a city government that had deep economic ties to slavery from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries—a city government that condoned not only slavery but also supported nearly 100 years of segregation."

When asked why he is introducing an apology resolution Shropshire said, "It's a simple gesture that our City Council is admitting its shame of its past history of condoning slavery and segregation. It's a statement that our attitudes and behavior are different today and that we want to continue to make solid, genuine progress through our public programs in the areas of racial reconciliation and providing hope for a good future to all our citizens."

Shropshire says the resolution will call for a week of reflection during August 2007. The resolution will ask schools, faith groups and civic organizations to provide forums for discussion about our City's participation in the African slave trade. Churches, synagogues and religious groups will be asked to offer sermons and prayers for continued racial reconciliation and to look for specific programs and ways to help men, women, and children who are living in community housing.

This date, Shropshire points out, coincides with the arrival of a "cargo of choice healthy slaves"\* aboard *The Lord Legonier* on September 29<sup>th</sup>, 1767. Those African men, women and children were auctioned during the following month for cash or tobacco at an Annapolis dock on Spa Creek.

The Virginia General Assembly voted unanimously on February 25, 2007, to express "profound regret" for Virginia's role in African slavery. A similar measure is also being considered by the Maryland General Assembly and the state legislatures of Georgia and Missouri. "The Annapolis City Council can take pride in the fact that it is the first municipal legislature to consider a slavery apology," Shropshire said.

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\*from an advertisement that appeared in *The Maryland Gazette* newspaper at that time.