

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 180

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Thomas Garrett was and should be recognized as a national abolitionist leader and activist in the struggle against slavery in the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Thomas Garrett was and should be recognized as a national abolitionist leader and activist in the struggle against slavery in the United States.

Whereas Thomas Garrett, a devout Quaker and noted abolitionist, was born in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, on August 21, 1789, and died on January 25, 1871;

Whereas Thomas Garrett became an abolitionist when he rescued a free Black woman who worked for his parents and was kidnapped by slave traders;

Whereas Thomas Garrett moved his family to Wilmington, Delaware, in 1822, to start his own business and continue his activism in the struggle against slavery;

Whereas Thomas Garrett boycotted goods made by enslaved labor, supported abolitionist petitions, authored opinion pieces in local newspapers, and organized with antislavery societies;

Whereas Thomas Garrett established a station of the Underground Railroad at his home and business on 227 Shipley Street, Wilmington, Delaware;

Whereas Thomas Garrett helped his friend and noted civil rights heroine, Harriet Tubman, rescue her parents from arrest for helping enslaved people escape to freedom;

Whereas Thomas Garrett helped over 2,400 people escape to freedom;

Whereas Thomas Garrett, in 1848, was found guilty by United States Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger B. Taney for violating the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 for helping a family escape to freedom;

Whereas Chief Justice Taney would later write the opinion for the court in the infamous Dred Scott decision;

Whereas Thomas Garrett vowed to continue his abolitionist activism despite the miscarriage of justice and a fine of \$5,400 imposed by Chief Justice Taney which nearly bankrupted him, despite its reduction to \$1,500;

Whereas the Maryland legislature proposed various exorbitant bounties for the arrest of Thomas Garrett due to his antislavery efforts;

Whereas Thomas Garrett joined a 10-person delegation of abolitionists to meet with President Abraham Lincoln on June 20, 1862, to urge the President to decree the emancipation of the enslaved;

Whereas President Abraham Lincoln started drafting the Emancipation Proclamation in July 1862; and

Whereas Thomas Garrett's life and contributions to the Underground Railroad and the abolition of slavery in the United States should be recognized as exemplary deeds of service for his country and his fellow citizens: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that—

3 (1) Thomas Garrett was unjustly convicted
4 under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793;

5 (2) Thomas Garrett was and should be recog-
6 nized as a national abolitionist leader and activist in
7 the struggle against slavery in the United States;
8 and

9 (3) the President should take appropriate meas-
10 ures within his power to honor Thomas Garrett's
11 service to the United States and to his fellow citi-
12 zens.

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