



BlackEconomics.org

“HR 40 and SB 1038: More Time, Money, and Direction”

Even with all of the hoopla concerning reparations this past week, we are still of the opinion that Black Americans don't really [want reparations](#). As we have said before, if we really want reparations, and if a study would help produce reparations, then we should fund the study ourselves.

As you know, the current companion bills HR 40 and SB 1038 call for the US Congress to approve and fund a study on the actions that the larger nation should take to repair the smaller (Black) nation. The bills require that a commission be formed to conduct the study. The commission would be comprised of members appointed by the US President and others—to include representatives from key civil rights organizations. The commission would have one year to finalize the study, and it would be awarded 12 million dollars to perform its work.

Therein lies the rubs. First, being appointed by disparate sources with different intents, the commission's membership may spend a considerable amount of time coming to terms with the study's approach and content. This means, the bill should extend more time for the commission to complete its work.

Second, 12 million dollars does not go very far. The money is to be used to compensate commission members and to underwrite the cost of research. It is likely that at least one aspect of the study will require a survey of the Black America's 45-plus million population. A well-designed and implemented survey will be costly. Moreover, the commission will likely perform in depth historical research on selected topics that will include historical documents that may be quite costly to secure. In other words, a high-quality study will not be cheap, meaning that the commission should be extended more than 12 million dollars to complete its work.

Third, a key flaw of the bills is that they do not identify precisely and definitively what should happen to the study once it is produced. Specifically, the bills do not require explicitly that the US Congress do anything with the study. Will the Congress do to the study what it has done to the reparations bill over the past 30 years; i.e., simply file it away? It seems important that the bills state that the study should be received by a specific set of congressional committees, and that, at a minimum, the study should undergo debate on the house and senate floors. In other words, the bills should be expanded to include more direction concerning what is to happen to the study.

Having said all of that, we remain pessimistic and argue that the Congress will not pass the bills because there is much division within Black America concerning reparations.

Therefore, we at BlackEconomics.org continue to support direct action by those Black Americans who really want reparations. What should we do? Raise sufficient funds and take the time required to develop a complete and high-quality study that includes final direction for Black Americans.

The study might show that White America will never acquiesce to reparations. Consequently, Black Americans should take what is due to us in the form of Federal Lands. We should occupy those lands systematically and build our own separate state—Shabazzland. If we plan properly, then we may be able to summon global support for such action. It will take time to develop such a plan, but at least Black Americans would have constructed a strategy for addressing the hardship and pain that we have endured in these United States for over 400 years.

If, in this day and at this time we fail to act on reparations, then we will be stating implicitly to the larger nation and to the world that we do not want reparations, and that we fear acting on our own behalf. Such a statement would open the door to our demise and signal the beginning of the end of Black America as we are known today.

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