Repair and Redress

How an H.R.40-style commission is vital to the Build Anew Agenda
Our Time Together

Here’s what we’ll be talking about:

- A Catholic Framework for Reparations
- H.R.40 Policy Update
- Faith Call for Reparations: Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis, Middle Church
- Messaging Tips & Tools
- What Can We Do?
- Q & A
SPEAKERS

Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis  
Middle Church Senior Minister

Jocelyn Lieu  
Middle Church Reparations Task Force

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The origin of H.R.40 began 80 years ago

- Japanese Americans vs. Franklin D. Roosevelt
  - Commission to study Japanese American internment
President Ronald Reagan signs the Civil Liberties Act in 1987

Representative John Conyers (D-MI) was the co-founder of the Congressional Black Caucus and saw an opportunity

H.R.40: The Commission to Study and Develop Reparations Proposals for African Americans Act

- Seeks to address and rectify the sinful effects of slavery in the United States
H.R.40 Policy Overview

Rep. Conyers resigned from Congress in 2017

The future of H.R.40 was entrusted to Rep. Shelia Jackson-Lee (D-TX)

- Under Rep. Jackson-Lee’s leadership, H.R.40 has received historic levels of support
The Time to Act Is NOW

117th Congress

- 216 co-sponsors and “yes” votes
- Passed out of House Judiciary Committee
The Congressional calendar is winding down

Shifting our ask to the White House to create an H.R.40-style commission by Executive Order
A campaign promise: President Biden pledged to tackle systemic racism and the continuing impacts of slavery by “supporting a study of reparations.”
The Moral Call for H.R.40

365+ secular and faith-based organizations are asking President Biden to sign an Executive Order establish the commission by Juneteenth (Sunday, June 19) of this year.
The Moral Call for H.R.40

Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis
Senior Minister for Public Theology and Transformation at Middle Church in Manhattan, New York

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The Moral Call for H.R.40

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**MESSAGING 101**

* RACE and RACISM
* Be inclusive to reduce apprehension
  * Whether we’re Black, white, or Brown…
  * Whether we’re Black or white, Asian or Latino, native or newcomer…
* People may initially be unreceptive to reparations, give them grace, accept them where they are, and offer further conversations

**REMEMBER,**
**YOU’RE PERSUADING PEOPLE TO SUPPORT A FEDERAL COMMISSION TO STUDY REPERATIONS, NOT REPARATIONS**
Use tangible and exact language

- Racist policy, racist policymaker, and racist power are precise
- White supremacy, G.I. Bill, Jim Crow

Some words can make it harder for a listener to accept your viewpoint.

- Structural racism, systemic racism, and implicit bias are vague
- Environmental racism, voter suppression
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<th><strong>PEOPLE IN YOUR NETWORK</strong></th>
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| **ACTIVISTS & ADVOCATES**  | ・ Spend time digging deep on political issues  
|                           | ・ Work or volunteer regularly for progressive organizations/causes  
|                           | ・ Support the four cornerstones of the Build Anew policy agenda  |
| **BASE**                  | ・ Strongly believe government should create opportunity  
|                           | ・ View wealth as largely a product of circumstances  
|                           | ・ Believe people of color face greater barriers than whites  
|                           | ・ Support our policy agenda  |
| **PERSUADABLE**           | ・ Of mixed minds on role of government, origins of wealth, benefits of talking about race  
|                           | ・ Likely to support our policy agenda, yet also lured by the opposition on questions of race, gender and government  |
| **OPPOSITION**            | ・ Strongly believe government should get out of the way  
|                           | ・ Think wealth is product of individual effort  
|                           | ・ Reject need to tackle racism and believe things have “shifted too far” on gender equity  |

*Inspired by research done by We Make The Future*

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PERSUADE WITH SHARED VALUES

The Persuadables

- Likely to support some Build Anew issues, but skeptical about the role of government, the origins of wealth, and benefits of talking about race

Call on shared values and reference race

- “Most of us, whether we’re Black, white, or Brown, work hard for our families.” or “Most of us, whether we live a block from the beach or on Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., work hard for our families.”

Name an active villain or perpetrator of harm

- “Sen. Mitch McConnell blocked a vote on S.40,” NOT “Our country has been deprived of racial healing”

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Offer a desirable outcome or vision

- “We will have the reparations study we need to repair the breach caused by slavery, segregation, exclusionary policies and racial hatred.”

Focus on outcomes, not policies or procedures

- “We can ensure everyone has the paid time off they need to recover from illness or care for a sick loved one,” NOT “We need paid family leave.”
How do we block the potency of right-wing populism rooted in white supremacy?

*IT WILL NOT BE EASY!*

Conversion will be a long road to travel for these individuals
Name racial scapegoats or deliberate division as a tool that villains use to profit, or gain power, harming us all

“Certain politicians claim that since no living person is responsible for slavery, reparations cannot be made for hundreds of years of racial harm. This is to distract us from the responsibility the government bears for Jim Crow, excluding Blacks from federal programs like the GI Bill, racist tax policy, and all of the racial harm that came after slavery.”
We discussed:

- Words and messaging for transformative conversations
- Audience strategy
- Stories of truth

Reach out to the Grassroots Mobilization Team for help with your conversations!
How To Be An Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi
The Color of Law by Richard Rothstein
From Here to Equality (Reparations for Black Americans in the 20th Century) by William Darity Jr and A. Kirsten Mullen
“How to Talk About Race and CRT in a Way that Wins”
USCCB Open Wide Our Hearts
Race Class Narrative message checklist

Keep learning and keep spreading the word!

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TAKE ACTION

Call the White House at 888-422-4555

Or email the White House networklobby.org/ActNow

Urge President Biden to issue an executive order creating a federal commission to study reparations by Juneteenth!
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Thank you!