



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jabari Brisport

Statement on Reparations Commission

JABARI BRISPORT June 8, 2023



Sen. Jabari Brisport is the prime sponsor of the Reparations & Remedies Community Act.

SEN. JABARI BRISPORT – “Given how much of New York’s wealth was generated by the slave economy, how much New York perpetuated the slave economy, and how segregated New York remains to this day, it is only right that our state actively work to repair the damage it has done to the Black community.

Beyond reparations being a moral obligation, they are also necessary for any hope of building a racially equitable future. For every \$100 in accumulated White family wealth, Black families hold just \$5.04 — that massive wealth gap is the direct result of generations of stolen wealth and opportunity, and it is virtually insurmountable without reparations.

This commission is an opportunity for New York to practice the kind of restorative justice that allows for real healing. The commission will be responsible for investigating how New York can best implement reparations, but the legislature will ultimately have to vote on those recommendations.

It should be noted, however, that **the version of the reparations commission we're passing has one — very concerning — difference** from the bill that passed the Assembly last year and has 22 co-sponsors in the State Senate: While this new bill also uses the term “community commission,” it does not guarantee any kind of input from the community about the appointments to the commission. Instead, it gives full control of the commission appointments to the Assembly Speaker, the Senate Majority Leader, and the Governor.

It's deeply unfortunate that the committee groups who have worked on the issue of reparations for decades were removed from the commission at the eleventh hour through this alternative bill, despite their essential role in getting us to this point.

I am very proud to have worked with them and former Assembly Member Charles Barron in fighting for this commission, and have seen through those efforts their extraordinary degree of collective expertise and wisdom on the subject of reparations. **I will continue to advocate for the appointments to this commission to be drawn from the community groups named in our original bill.**

If done right, this commission can set the stage for a new era of racial equity.”