



DELAWARE JUNETEENTH ASSOCIATION

“Lest We Forget”

**139 Asbury Loop
Middletown, DE 19709
302.530.1605**

August 25, 2023

Joseph R. Biden
The President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write with due respect to express our strong support for the April 18, 2023, request for a posthumous pardon of Marcus Mosiah Garvey’s 1923 conviction for fraudulent use of the mail, submitted to your administration.

Nearly 100 years ago, Marcus Garvey was convicted of mail fraud in a case that was marred by prosecutorial and governmental misconduct. As a result of this injustice, President Calvin Coolidge commuted Garvey's sentence upon eligibility. The evidence present and available at our disposal paints an abundantly clear narrative that the charges brought against Marcus Mosiah Garvey were not only fraudulent, but executed in bad faith. A Presidential pardon for Mr. Garvey would correct the historical record and shift the narrative during a time when African-American history faces the existential threat of erasure by radical state legislatures. More importantly, exoneration would reaffirm our commitment to a criminal justice system that guarantees de facto equity under rule of law. Marcus Garvey's contributions and influence are interwoven into the fabric of American history. His works have influenced leaders from Martin Luther King, Jr. to Nelson Mandela, inspiring generations of leaders and planting the seeds for the civil rights movement.

As the founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League, Mr. Garvey inspired nearly six million people across 40 countries with a message of social progress through economic prosperity.

Delaware Juneteenth Association

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The DEJA Mission: To develop and implement strategic prevention programming that addresses the problems facing our communities: Alcohol, tobacco and substance abuse, gang related violence, teen pregnancy and low self-esteem by educating our children from pre-school to young adults through workshops and cultural events that provides knowledge and celebrates the African American experience as our heritage relates to all people.



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Although President Coolidge commuted his sentence, Garvey was immediately deported and never permitted to return to the United States. Calls for Garvey's exoneration have been constant since his conviction. Many people had supported pardon efforts during Garvey's lifetime and have continued to do so posthumously. Congressional efforts to rectify this matter began in 1987, when then-Congressman, John Conyers held a Judiciary Committee hearing regarding Garvey's unfair trial. Since then, Congressional resolutions have been introduced by Congressman Rangel, and most recently, by Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke, seeking to clear Garvey's name.

In light of Marcus Garvey's sustained efforts to uplift and empower peoples of African descent, his determination to build communities through economic independence, and his lasting impact on society, we find it imperative that Mr. Garvey be exonerated by way of a posthumous pardon. The passage of time has confirmed his place in history but has not removed the stain of this injustice from his legacy.

Mr. Garvey's vision of racial justice has been honored by governments around the world — this is the U.S. government's opportunity to honor his work for the Black community and remove the unjust stain on his legacy. Furthermore, this is an opportunity for the Biden Administration to renew and deliver on its inaugural promise of delivering racial justice.

We appreciate your time and consideration regarding this pertinent matter.

Sincerely,

Sandy Clark

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