

## Climbing Protesters Deface Anti-Slavery Billboard

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Over the last weekend, protesters climbed a 30-foot billboard featuring a positive, anti-slavery message placed by the Republican Party of Dane County. The message said, “Thanks Republicans (for the) 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, Emancipation, and Freedom.” It also featured an image of Abraham Lincoln from the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C.

“I was a little shocked that people would choose to deface a sign celebrating the freeing of the slaves by Republican President Abraham Lincoln with the Emancipation Proclamation and the passage of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment ending slavery forever in the United States,” said Republican Chair Scott Grabins.

“On the other hand, maybe it was not so surprising in such a heavily Democrat area, since most Democrats in the Senate and the House of Representatives voted against the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment,” noted Grabins. He

continued, “As much as the foundation of the Republican Party is rooted in fighting slavery, the Democratic Party’s foundation is rooted in fighting for the institution of slavery and promoting other, racist institutions like Planned Parenthood.”

It is interesting to note that of the three names spray painted on the sign - Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman, and Frederick Douglass - two, Tubman and Douglass, were Republicans. Douglass was a friend of President Lincoln and Tubman believed in the right of freed slaves to bear arms like the rest of their fellow Americans. Many early gun laws were aimed at preventing black Americans from owning guns. The other name, Nat Turner, led a slave rebellion in 1831.

No matter how they might try to erase or obscure the truth, the Republican Party of Dane County will fight back and replace those defaced original billboards. “Black lives have mattered to the Republican Party for over 160 years,” Grabins concluded. “We are all Americans and the Republican Party was formed right here in Wisconsin by abolitionists in 1854 to fight for freedom for all.”

The Republican Party today continues to reaffirm our commitment to life, liberty, and opportunity for all Americans, regardless of race. We will never give up our efforts to educate the public on the truth that it was Republicans who opposed and ended slavery.

