

112TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. J. RES. 45

Amending title 36, United States Code, to designate June 19 as “Juneteenth Independence Day”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 19, 2012

Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WEBB, Mr. NELSON of Florida, and Mr. AKAKA) introduced the following joint resolution; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

JOINT RESOLUTION

Amending title 36, United States Code, to designate June 19 as “Juneteenth Independence Day”.

Whereas news of the end of slavery did not reach the frontier of the United States, and in particular the Southwestern States, for more than 2½ years after President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, and months after the conclusion of the Civil War;

Whereas, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War had ended and that the slaves were free;

Whereas African Americans who had been slaves in the Southwest celebrated June 19, commonly known as “Juneteenth Independence Day”, as the anniversary of their emancipation;

Whereas African Americans from the Southwest continue the tradition of celebrating Juneteenth Independence Day as inspiration and encouragement for future generations;

Whereas for more than 145 years, Juneteenth Independence Day celebrations have honored African-American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures; and

Whereas the faith and strength of character demonstrated by former slaves remain an example for all people of the United States, regardless of their background, religion, or race: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*

2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF JUNE 19 AS JUNETEENTH**

4 **INDEPENDENCE DAY.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 36, United
6 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
7 lowing:

8 **“§ 145. Juneteenth Independence Day**

9 “(a) DESIGNATION.—June 19 is Juneteenth Inde-
10 pendence Day.

11 “(b) PROCLAMATION.—The President is requested to
12 issue each year a proclamation calling on State and local
13 governments and the people of the United States to ob-

1 serve Juneteenth Independence Day with appropriate
2 ceremonies, programs, and activities.”.

3 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
4 for chapter 1 of title 36, United States Code, is amended
5 by adding at the end the following:

“145. Juneteenth Independence Day.”.

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