

112TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. RES. 496

Observing the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 19, 2012

Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WEBB, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WICKER, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

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## RESOLUTION

Observing the historical significance of Juneteenth  
Independence Day.

Whereas news of the end of slavery did not reach frontier areas of the United States, and in particular the Southwestern States, for more than 2½ years after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which was issued 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 enslaved 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 been held to honor 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 background, religion, or race: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That—

2               (1) the Senate—

3                       (A) recognizes the historical significance of  
4               Juneteenth Independence Day to the Nation;

5                       (B) supports the continued celebration of  
6               Juneteenth Independence Day to provide an opportunity for the people of the United States to  
7               learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped the Nation;  
8               and  
9               and  
10              tion; and

11                      (C) encourages the people of the United  
12              States to observe Juneteenth Independence Day

1 with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and pro-  
2 grams; and

3 (2) it is the sense of the Senate that—

4 (A) the celebration of the end of slavery is  
5 an important and enriching part of the history  
6 and heritage of the United States; and

7 (B) history should be regarded as a means  
8 for understanding the past and solving the chal-  
9 lenges of the future.

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