

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 175

Observing Juneteenth Independence Day, June 19, 1865, the day on which slavery finally came to an end in the United States.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 19, 2013

Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. COWAN, Mr. HARKIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BROWN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. HAGAN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. COONS, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. CRUZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. RISCH, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. WICKER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. NELSON, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, and Ms. WARREN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Observing Juneteenth Independence Day, June 19, 1865, the day on which slavery finally came to an end in the United States.

Whereas news of the end of slavery did not reach the 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, 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 inspiration and encouragement for future generations;

Whereas African Americans from the Southwest, for more than 145 years, continue the tradition of observing Juneteenth Independence Day;

Whereas 42 States, the District of Columbia, and other countries, including Goree Island, Senegal (a former slave port), have designated Juneteenth Independence Day as a special day of observance in recognition of the emancipation of all slaves in the United States;

Whereas Juneteenth Independence Day celebrations have been held to honor African-American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures;

Whereas the faith and strength of character demonstrated by former slaves and their descendants remain an example for all people of the United States, regardless of background, religion, or race;

Whereas the late Lula Briggs Galloway of Saginaw, Michigan—author, social activist, curator of African-American history, originator of the interim Juneteenth Creative Culture Center and Museum in Saginaw, Michigan, and then-President of the National Association of Juneteenth Lineage, Inc.—successfully worked to bring national recognition to Juneteenth Independence Day and encouraged the United States Senate and the United States

House of Representatives to pass a resolution in 1997 in honor of that day;

Whereas national observance of Juneteenth Independence Day continues under the steadfast leadership of the National Juneteenth Observance Foundation;

Whereas Frederick Douglass, born Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey in Maryland in 1818, escaped from slavery and became a leading writer, orator, and publisher, and one of the United States' most influential advocates for abolitionism, and the equality of all people;

Whereas, on September 10, 2012, and September 12, 2012, the House of Representatives and the Senate, respectively, each passed legislation, signed into law by the President on September 20, 2012 (Public Law 112–174), to direct the Joint Committee on the Library to accept a statue depicting Frederick Douglass from the District of Columbia and to provide for the permanent display of the statue in Emancipation Hall of the United States Capitol, during an unveiling Ceremony on June 19, 2013, the same day as recognition of Juneteenth Independence Day;

Whereas, on June 18, 2009, the United States Senate and on July 29, 2008, the United States House of Representatives each adopted resolutions apologizing for the legacy of slavery in the United States and “Jim Crow” laws;

Whereas the crime of lynching succeeded slavery, and on June 13, 2005, the United States Senate adopted a resolution apologizing to the victims of lynching and the descendants of those victims;

Whereas slavery was not officially abolished until the ratification of the 13th amendment to the Constitution of the United States in January 1865; and

Whereas, over the course of its history, the United States has grown into a symbol of democracy and freedom around the world: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the historical significance of
3 Juneteenth Independence Day to the United States;

4 (2) supports the continued nationwide celebra-
5 tion of Juneteenth Independence Day to provide an
6 opportunity for the people of the United States to
7 learn more about the past and to better understand
8 the experiences that have shaped the United States;
9 and

10 (3) recognizes that the observance of the end of
11 slavery is a part of the history and heritage of the
12 United States.

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