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# OBSERVING THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 559, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant editor of the Daily Digest read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 559) observing the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BURRIS. Mr. President, on a hot day in the summer of 1776, delegates from across the American Colonies gathered in Philadelphia to cast off the yoke of tyranny and assert the fundamental right of self-government.

At that moment, when our Republic was born, our Founders ratified a document unique in human history which contained the landmark words:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.

This simple creed became the justification of a great Revolutionary War, which gave rise to the thriving democracy we inhabit today. That is why we celebrate every Fourth of July as Independence Day—because of the principles laid out in that remarkable Declaration.

But, tragically, for almost a century after that document was ratified, the equality of all men remained an unfulfilled promise. It began to seem that the Declaration of Independence defined our aspirations rather than our core beliefs.

Slavery, brutal and unjust, remained legal throughout the majority of the 19th century and helped set the stage for the bloodiest war we have ever known. But, as President Lincoln had dearly hoped, out of that terrible violence was born a new and more complete freedom—a freedom that wiped out the scourge of slavery once and for all and realized the promise our Founding Fathers documented for all Americans.

That is why, on Saturday, many in this country observe another independence day known as Juneteenth. Slavery ended in the Confederate States of America when President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. But many slaves did not learn of their freedom until much later.

Finally, on June 19, 1865—more than 2 years after the Emancipation Proclamation—Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, TX. They brought news that must have been almost unbelievable to all who heard it. The Civil War was over, they announced, and all slaves were free.

From that day on, former slaves in the Southwest celebrated June 19 as the anniversary of their emancipation. That is why I have submitted this resolution observing the historical significance of this date—Juneteenth Independence Day.

Over the past 145 years, Juneteenth celebrations have been held to honor African-American freedom. But this date has come to hold even greater significance. Throughout the world, Juneteenth celebrations lift the spirit of freedom and rail against the forces of oppression. At long last, this day is beginning to be recognized as both a national event and a global celebration.

But just as the Fourth of July marks the beginning of a journey that continues even today, we must not forget that the long march to freedom that started on June 19, 1865, is far from over.

Our country has made great strides in the century and a half since slavery was abolished, but deep wounds are slow to heal. We will never be able to rewrite this terrible history. But we can, and we must, do everything we can to rise above it—to seek constructive solutions to the problems that time alone cannot wash away, problems that still affect the African-American community on a daily basis, from discrimination, to crime, to health care disparities, to unemployment, to substance abuse, and so on.

So let's pay tribute to the suffering of our forefathers by seeking justice for our children. Let's remember our past by looking to our future and confronting these problems with bold, new solutions.

This is a day for all of us to stand together and lift up the liberties we hold so dear—a day to look forward, to look ahead to tomorrow, and continue the fight for freedom and equality.

So I ask my colleagues to stand with me. I ask them to support my resolution observing the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day. I invite them to share the joy of those who greeted Union soldiers in Galveston more than 140 years ago.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I rise to highlight the celebration of Juneteenth throughout my State of Colorado.

One hundred forty-five years ago, Black slaves in Galveston, TX, heard the contents of "General Order No. 3," which proclaimed their freedom from slavery. Though the announcement in Galveston in 1865 came over 2 years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, for the first time, Black slaves learned of their freedom from a shameful policy of early America that threatened the wellbeing of the entire Union. June 19, 1865, was a joyous day for these men, women and children and has since become a day of reflection and celebration as the day when Lincoln's words in the Emancipation Proclamation were finally realized. As African Americans migrated

west and out of Texas, they carried with them the memories and message they had heard on that great day in June.

Communities in Colorado come together every year to continue a tradition that highlights a notable turning point in our country's history; a point at which our country's hard fought efforts to empower a segment of America's population materialized. Today, just as before, this community has continued to make powerful and positive contributions to our common quality of life. That is why it is no surprise to me that this tradition carries on. In Colorado, citizens of various backgrounds gather in Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Denver and in the backyards of communities across our State to celebrate Juneteenth.

I am particularly proud to mention that in Pueblo, CO, they are celebrating the 30th anniversary of their first official Juneteenth celebration with the theme "Growing the Community." And just as in Colorado Springs, Denver and other places across the State, it is an event that shares this history and time of reflection with the entire community.

To all my fellow Coloradans who will gather this June 19 to celebrate an important event in America's history, I wish you a safe and joyous occasion. And I am proud that you continue to instill a sense of history and community that provides rich cultural and historical knowledge of our country's fight to ensure freedom for all.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements related to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 559) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

## S. RES. 559

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 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 140 years, Juneteenth Independence Day celebrations

have been held to honor African-American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures;

Whereas, although Juneteenth Independence Day is beginning to be recognized as a national, and even global, event, the history behind the celebration should not be forgotten; and

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

*Resolved, That—*

(1) the Senate—

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

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

(C) encourages the people of the United States to observe Juneteenth Independence Day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs; and

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

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

(B) history should be regarded as a means for understanding the past and solving the challenges of the future.

#### ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 2010

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 17; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and that following any leader remarks, there be a period of morning business until 10 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half; that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of the House message to accompany H.R. 4213, tax extenders, as provided for under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### PROGRAM

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, at approximately 12 noon, the Senate will proceed to a vote in relation to the Thune amendment No. 4333, the Republican alternative to the tax extenders legislation. Additional votes are expected to occur throughout the day in relation to amendments to the bill.

#### ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate adjourn under the previous order following the remarks of Senator GRASSLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I wish to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MUST-DO LEGISLATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the legislative business before the Senate deals with the so-called tax extenders. These extenders, as important as they are, represent only a small portion of the time-sensitive tax legislative business that needs to be completed.

I have a chart that I have used the last few days illustrating the status of several pieces of absolutely must-do tax legislation.

Earlier this week, I discussed the lack of action on this year's alternative minimum tax. I refer to that as an AMT patch. In a day or two, I will discuss the failure of Congress to act on the bipartisan 2001 and 2003 marginal rate cuts and Family Tax Relief Act.

This evening, I want to discuss the lack of action on estate tax reform.

Most of my colleagues know this about me—for as many years as I have been a representative of the people of Iowa, I have never believed that death—a person dying—should be a taxable event.

Taxing people's assets upon their death is plain wrong, and their heirs should not be forced to sell a single asset in order to meet this arbitrary tax due date caused by death.

Company assets should not have to be sold to pay taxes. The market, in fact, should determine when things are bought and sold because that is the very best measurement when a willing buyer meets a willing seller and they agree on a price and a time when a company should be sold. In other words, if you have to do it because somebody died, a fire-sale approach probably does not determine the true value of that property and, consequently, less money to the heirs and even less tax money coming in.

That is where I come from. We ought to repeal the death tax. But that is not political reality. The political reality is that there are not 60 votes in the Senate for that policy. Unfortunately, while repeal is the law of the land today, in a few months the law will take a sharp turn in the other direction—a wrong direction.

Under current law, in 2011, we will once again have an estate tax due and owing within 9 months of death of 55

percent and even in some cases 60 percent. That is not right. We force many unwilling sellers to have to deal with a very willing shark of a buyer waiting in the murky waters of tax uncertainty.

Some people wonder why I care so much about this issue. Pundits might say that Iowa is poor compared to places such as New York City and that land and companies are not worth much.

Much of the press attention has been paid to what the current law does this year. For instance, the New York Times printed an article on how the current law repeal of the estate tax applies to a Texas billionaire who died a few weeks ago.

We are almost half a year away from a tax policy that a supermajority of Senators say they do not support. Yet we are stuck in a mud hole. This time-sensitive issue has taken a back seat in this body to everything else.

My colleagues may not know that Iowa has 99 counties, and I have visited each of the 99 counties every year for the last 29 years to hold town meetings and to get people's opinions. Let me give a couple examples I have learned of why I think this issue of doing something quickly about the estate tax is a very important issue and a very timely issue.

I want to talk about some people who live in Iowa. Not only do they live in Iowa, they have devoted their entire life for multiple generations to build businesses and create good jobs for the people of rural Iowa.

Over 44 years ago, Eugene and Mary Sukup started a grain handling and storage manufacturing company in Sheffield, IA. Today, the Sukups and their two sons and their families are still headquartered in Sheffield, IA, population of a whopping 990 people, about 300 more than the town in which I live. They employ over 300 people from five different counties in good-paying jobs with a good retirement plan.

In fact, the original employee team that started with them almost 40 years ago is still there today and, in many cases, the next generation has also joined the team.

This chart depicts one of the main products they make and sell. For city folks who are watching, this piece of equipment is a building called a grain bin. I have some grain bins such as this on my family farm that my son Robin operates.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a short history of the innovative efforts of the Sukup family.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Sukup Manufacturing Co is a family-owned and operated company located in Sheffield, Iowa—right in the heart of Midwest farmland. The company manufactures a full line of grain storage, drying and handling equipment, as well as a line of implements.