



Legislation Text

File #: RES 23-878, **Version:** 1

Commemorating Juneteenth 2023 as an annual celebration of Black liberation.

WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation ending slavery in the Confederacy effective January 1, 1863; and

WHEREAS, the news that slavery had officially ended and that the slaves were free throughout the land now known as the United States was neither announced nor enforced in the western former Confederate states such as Mississippi, Louisiana, and in particular Texas until two and a half years after the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation due to a low presence of the Union Army in those areas; and

WHEREAS, when Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, to establish the Union Army's command over Texas, he announced to the people of Texas on June 19, 1865, the end of slavery and the freedom of the slaves; and

WHEREAS, the formerly enslaved people in Texas celebrated their freedom on June 19, 1865, and such celebrations gradually evolved into the official commemorative holiday which has become known as "Juneteenth", which continues to be celebrated throughout the United States today through festivities, ceremonies, food, and other cultural traditions; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth serves as an extremely significant day of remembrance and acknowledgment of the history, freedom, culture, strength, perseverance, and achievement of the past, present, and future generations of the African American community; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth holds an important place not only in African American history, but in United States history for all Americans to reflect on, learn about, and appreciate the struggles, triumphs, and continued growth of our nation as a whole; and

WHEREAS, local communities throughout the United States, such as our home city of Saint Paul, Minnesota, support the significance of Juneteenth and all that it symbolizes in the history, memory, and culture of African American people, and the resulting societal impact that has reverberated to all people in our community and beyond, and

WHEREAS, since 2021, the United States Congress and President Joe Biden took formal action to make Juneteenth a federal holiday, and in Saint Paul, Mayor Melvin Carter established Juneteenth as an official city holiday; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF Saint Paul that June 19th of each year has been established and is annually recognized throughout Saint Paul as a day of commemoration which shall be known as "Juneteenth Independence Day".