

SENATE RESOLUTION

8671

By Senators Saldaña, Darneille, McCoy, Rolfes, Hobbs, and Hasegawa

1 WHEREAS, More than two and one-half years after President
2 Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, enslaved people — men, women,
3 and children — in Galveston, Texas had not yet received word that the
4 enslaved were now free; and

5 WHEREAS, Juneteenth Independence Day commemorates the day in 1865
6 when Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, arrived in
7 Galveston and issued an order announcing that the Civil War had ended
8 and slaves were free at last; and

9 WHEREAS, The following year, the freed people of Texas and other
10 Southwestern states celebrated emancipation on June 19th, a tradition
11 that traveled with them as they relocated to new states; and

12 WHEREAS, Observation of this day began to wane outside of Texas,
13 but was revived, in part, when Coretta Scott King and Reverend Ralph
14 Abernathy held Solidarity Day on June 19, 1968, as part of the Poor
15 People's Campaign, which was organized by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
16 before his assassination; and

17 WHEREAS, Now, more than 150 years after the first celebration,
18 Juneteenth is recognized as an official holiday in 45 states,
19 including the state of Washington; and

20 WHEREAS, The history behind this celebration should never be
21 forgotten; and

22 WHEREAS, On Juneteenth we honor the resolve, tenacity, and
23 strength of character demonstrated by former slaves who remain an

1 example for all people of all races, religions, genders, and sexual
2 orientations in the United States; and

3 WHEREAS, This historical day is also a time to recommit ourselves
4 to the work that remains to be done, work that must be done by all of
5 us; and

6 WHEREAS, Today, we rededicate ourselves to fight for equality and
7 equity for all with an understanding of the past that must inform our
8 future;

9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate
10 recognize the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day
11 and encourage the celebration of this holiday every year.

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