

Legislation Text

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Commemorating and celebrating June 19th as Juneteenth, when final enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation was ordered in Texas, marking the end of the enslavement of Black and brown people in the United States.

WHEREAS, The Civil War was fought to end the enslavement of Black and Brown people in the United States and restore basic human dignity for every person in the United States. That goal was realized on June 19, 1865 when final enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation was ordered in Texas; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia is the largest major City with a majority population that identifies with minority groups. It is one of the most diverse Cities on the planet, and has a long storied history of promoting equity; and

WHEREAS, The first written demand for the abolition of slavery in the United States emerged from Germantown, Philadelphia. Philadelphia served as a major hub on the underground railroad, protecting Black refugees from enslavement in the South. Juneteenth is commonly known as a second Independence Day; and

WHEREAS, Every State has subsequently recognized and celebrated Juneteenth. That culminated in the creation of a new Federal holiday on Juneteenth in 2021. Juneteenth is the first new Federal holiday created since the establishment of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in 1983; and

WHEREAS, The end of enslavement did not repair or redress the history of pain and generations of theft imposed on Black people who suffered from enslavement. That history has not been redressed; ongoing gaps in Black wealth and homeownership illustrate that the history of slavery in the United States continues to have an impact on the present; and

WHEREAS, Celebration of freedom from tyranny and the end of enslavement is critical to reckoning with the full scope of the history of the United States. Juneteenth represents a triumph over tyranny, and a fundamental step to realizing the core principle of the founding of the United States, that all people are created equal and are entitled to inalienable rights and freedom; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Commemorates and celebrates June 19th as Juneteenth, when final enforcement of Emancipation Proclamation was ordered in Texas, marking the end of the enslavement of Black and brown people in the United States.