

## Legislation Text

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In Support of the Philadelphia Juneteenth 2000 Observance and National Juneteenth Holiday Campaign.

WHEREAS, Being in existence for more than one hundred thirty years, Juneteenth is the oldest celebratory African American holiday observance of freedom in the United States and serves as a historical milestone reminding Americans of the triumph of the human spirit over the cruelty of captivity. The celebration honors those African ancestors who survived the inhumane institution of bondage, as well as demonstrating pride in the marvelous legacy of resistance and perseverance they left; and,

WHEREAS, Approximately eleven and one-half million Africans survived the voyage across the Atlantic Ocean known as the Middle Passage. The numbers of Africans that died in the Middle Passage are more than likely greater than those who survived. Captured Africans endured inhumane treatment on the voyage and, upon arrival in the United States and for more than 200 years of bondage, they and their descendents were subjected to lynching, whippings, castration, rape, branding and tearing apart of families; and,

WHEREAS, At the end of the Civil War, Freedom soldiers from several infantries marched from state to state educating the enslaved that they were free. On June 13<sup>th</sup>, they entered the borders of Texas to free the last of the enslaved in America; and,

WHEREAS, On June 19, 1865, two years, five months, and eighteen days after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, in the City of Galveston, Texas, General Gordon Granger read General Order #3, officially freeing the last of those enslaved within the borders of the United States. This lead to the eruption of a spontaneous celebration; and,

WHEREAS, Americans of all colors, creeds, cultures, religions and countries-of-origin, share in common love of and respect for "freedom" as well as a determination to protect their right to freedom through democratic institutions, by which the "tenets-of-freedom" are guaranteed and protected; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby are in support of this historic recognition and encourage participation of the citizens of Philadelphia in the first officially recognized Philadelphia Juneteenth 2000 National Holiday Observance scheduled for Saturday, June 17- Monday June 19, 2000.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to The Philadelphia Juneteenth Coalition as a symbol of this legislative body's sincere respect for the precepts that are embodied in this observance.